

T W E L V E
S E R M O N S

P R E A C H E D O N
Several Occasions.

By *GEORGE STANHOPE, D.D.*
Dean of *Canterbury*, and Chaplain in
Ordinary to His M A J E S T Y.

- | | |
|--|--|
| I. The Nature of that Obedience, which is the Condition of Salvation. | tions to Gratitude, and a good Life. |
| II. Of God's deferring to answer those Prayers, which he intends at length to grant. | VIII. The Case of Mistaken Zeal. |
| III. Of Preparation for Death and Judgment. | IX. The Influence which National Deliverances, and the Preservation of True Religion, ought to have upon a People. |
| IV. The Perfection of Scripture Stated, and its Sufficiency Argued. | X. The common Obstructions to Faith and a good Life considered. |
| V. A Sermon before the Sons of the Clergy. | XI. A Thanksgiving Sermon for the Successes of the Campaign, 1710. |
| VI. The Happiness of good Men after Death. | XII. The Sin and Folly of immoderate Carefulness. |
| VII. The Seaman's Obligations to Gratitude, and a good Life. | |

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. and J. BONWICKE, at the *Red Lion*,
and T. ASTLEY, at the *Dolphin and Crown* in
St. Paul's Church-Yard; and T. WOTTON, at the
Queen's Head and Three Daggers against *St. Dun-*
stan's Church in *Fleet-Street*. M.DCC.XXVII.



7-1250



T H E
CONTENTS.

S E R M O N I.

Preach'd before Queen *Mary*.

The Nature of that Obedience, which is
the Condition of Salvation.

M A T T. xix. 17.



*If thou wilt enter into Life
keep the Commandments.*

Page 1

S E R M O N II.

Before King *William* and Queen *Mary*.

Of God's Deferring to answer those Pray-
ers which he intends at length to grant.

M A T T. xv. 28.

*Then Jesus answered and said unto her,
O Woman, great is thy Faith: Be it
unto thee, even as thou wilt. And her
Daughter was made whole from that
very Hour.*

P. 35

A 2

S E R-

S E R M O N III.

To Queen *Mary's* Family.

Of Preparation for Death and Judgment.

M A T T. xxiv. 44.

Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an Hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.

P. 71

S E R M O N IV.

At a publick Commencement at *Cambridge*.

The Perfection of Scripture Stated, and its Sufficiency Argued.

2 T I M. iii. 16, 17.

All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness:

That the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works.

P. 113

S E R-

The C O N T E N T S.

v

S E R M O N V.

Before the Sons of the Clergy.

T I T U S i. 6.

----- *Having faithful Children, not accused of Riot, or unruly.* p. 167

S E R M O N VI.

The Happiness of Good Men after Death.

R E V. xiv. 13.

I heard a Voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write; Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them. p. 207

S E R M O N VII.

To the Honourable Corporation of
Trinity-House.

The Seaman's Obligations to Gratitude,
and a Good Life.

P S A L M cvii. 23, 24.

*They that go down to the Sea in Ships,
and do Business in great Waters:
These Men see the Works of the Lord,
and his Wonders in the Deep.* p. 245
S E R-

The CONTENTS.

S E R M O N VIII.

At St. Paul's, London.

The Case of Mistaken Zeal.

J O H N xvi. 2.

----- Yea the Time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God Service.

p. 288

S E R M O N IX.

Thanksgiving Sermon before Queen Anne,
Nov. 5. 1706.

The Influence which National Deliverances, and the Preservation of True Religion, ought to have upon a People.

D E U T. iv. 7, 8, 9.

What Nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all Things that we call upon him for?

And what Nation is there so great, that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous, as all this Law, which I set before you this Day?

Only take heed to thy self, and keep thy Soul diligently, lest thou forget the Things which thine Eyes have seen, and
lest

The CONTENTS.

vii

lest they depart from thy Heart all the Days of thy Life ; but teach them thy Sons, and thy Sons Sons. p. 326

S E R M O N X.

Preached at Court, 1709.

The Common Obstructions to Faith and a Good Life consider'd.

L U K E XXIV. 25.

Then he said unto them, O Fools, and slow of Heart, to believe all that the 'Prophets have spoken ! P. 354

S E R M O N XI.

A Thanksgiving Sermon for the Successes of the Campaign, 1710.

2 C O R. i. 9, 10, 11.

We had the Sentence of Death in our selves, that we should not trust in our selves, but in God, which raiseth the Dead,

Who delivered us from so great a Death, and doth deliver ; in whom we trust, that he will yet deliver us.

You also helping together by Prayer for us, that for the Gift bestowed upon us by the means of many Persons, Thanks may be given by many, on our behalf.

P. 378
SER-

SERMON XII.

Before Queen *Anne*.

The Sin and Folly of Immoderate Carefulness.

M A T T. vi. 34.

Take therefore no Thought for the Morrow: For the Morrow shall take Thought for the Things of it self. Sufficient unto the Day, is the Evil thereof.

P. 400

ERRATA.

P	AGE 31.	Line 6.	for Saying, read Sayings;
	61.	3.	for He, read God;
		ult.	r. Qualification;
	107.	8.	r. Church of England, teaches all,
	124.	23.	after unsearchable, dele [,]
	180.	25.	r. less accountable;
	198.	4.	r. Portion;
	211.	6.	dele both;
	264.	5.	r. argues;
	334.	ult.	r. selfish;
	336.	ult.	r. Oppressors themselves, converted,
	375.	23.	for when, r. while;
	402.	17.	r. such a solicitous Degree;
	405.	13.	r. small Part in comparison;
	412.	13.	after take, dele [,]
	414.	1.	r. justle.

S E R-



SERMON I.

Preach'd before the

QUEEN at *Whitehall*,

MAY 14. 1693.

T H E

Fourth *Sunday* after *Easter*.



M A T T. xix. 17.

--- *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep
the Commandments.*



Y Text is a Part of that very remarkable Passage, between our Saviour and the rich young Man in the Gospel; Of whom the Sixteenth Verse
B gives

SER. M. gives an Account, that he accosted our
 I. Lord with this most important Question,
*Good Master, what good Thing shall I
 do, that I may inherit eternal Life?*
 Which compendious Enquiry our Lord
 satisfies here, with as comprehensive an
 Answer, *If thou wilt enter into Life,
 keep the Commandments.*

FROM these Words I shall not make
 it my Business, to argue the Necessity of
 good Works in general; For, alas! how
 very few of the Men that lead wicked
 Lives, do it upon a Persuasion, that they
 are under no Obligations to the contrary?
 But, because Mistakes in the Nature of
 our Duty, and a fond Imagination, that
 the Commands of God are more easily sa-
 tisfied than really they are, do commonly
 betray People to infinite Follies and Dan-
 gers; I shall rather endeavour to possess
 you, with a just and powerful Sense of
 that Obedience, which is made, in my
 Text, the Condition of *entering into
 Life.*

AND in order to this I shall shew,

I. THE

before the Queen.

3

S E R M.

I.

I. THE true Nature and just Extent of a Christian's Obedience to God's Commandments. And,

II. THE Necessity of it, and the Reasonableness of This being made the Condition of our attaining to Life and Happiness.

1. *First*, As to the Nature and just Extent of our Obedience, it implies and requires these *Four* Qualifications.

First, THAT a Man apply himself sincerely to keep *All* God's Commandments.

Secondly, THAT he observe them in their true Perfection, and that more spiritual and refined Sense, to which Christianity hath now exalted them.

Thirdly, THAT he do it, upon a religious Principle, and for this Consideration, *That they are the Commands of God.*

Fourthly, THAT he persevere in keeping them, and (as our Vow in Baptism expresses it) *walk in the same all the Days of his Life.*

B 2

THESE

SERM.

I.

THESE are the Measures of a true Christian Obedience: And tho' we may not so presume to limit God's Mercies, as absolutely to shut out all, that come not up to these Heights; yet it is no less Presumption, perhaps indeed a more dangerous one, to stretch those Mercies beyond the Standard of the Gospel. Whatever is more than this, is an act of God's supreme dispensing Prerogative; an Indulgence, that he hath no where obliged himself to, and consequently, such as no Man can safely depend upon: For, as the Collect for this Day instructs us very well, *the loving that which he commands*, and loving it so, as constantly to keep and live by it, is the only sure Way, to *obtain what he hath promised*.

II. AND therefore, as to what regards my Second Part, which pretends to prove the Necessity of this Obedience, and the Fitness of its being made the Condition of Happiness to us; I shall not treat of that separately, and by its self, but beg leave to apply it to every Branch of the former Head distinctly; that

before the Queen.

5

that so it may appear, that I have in no Particular made a too rigorous Interpretation of our Duty : And because *entring into Life* in the Text is capable of a double Sense : Either becoming a *Disciple* of Christ, which is the Way to Life : Or enjoying everlasting Happiness ; which is the Reward of that *Discipleship*, and the End of that Way ; I shall endeavour to prove, that nothing short of what has been proposed, can either make good the Covenant of the *Gospel*, as it stands charged upon us here, or qualifies us for inheriting the Kingdom of Heaven hereafter.

S E R M

I.

I. FIRST then, I say, One necessary Qualification of a Christian's Obedience is, that he apply himself sincerely to keep *All* God's Commandments. There is no Man so lost to Reason and Virtue, but he finds it for his Purpose to observe *Some* of them : Natural Modesty, and the Preservation of one's self, and the promoting an Interest with others, persuade the Practice of many commendable Things. Sicknels, and Poverty, and publick Punishments, and the Reproach

6 *A SERMON preach'd*

SERM. of the World, restrain Men from gratifying *Many* corrupt Inclinations: The Fear of God too will have some Check upon the Conscience, and enforce the other Considerations more powerfully. And these Impressions, People, who make any Pretensions at all to Goodness, are pretty well content to submit to, in many, if not in most Matters. But still, if there be any one reserved Case, any favourite Corruption, upon which Religion exercises its Powers but feebly; but One, tho' it be, that continues Proof against all the Charms and all the Terrors of the Gospel, that single Exception is a Blemish to the Whole, and renders all the rest of a good Life of no Effect, though one should labour never so zealously in Other Instances to please God, and save one's own Soul.

THE Mischief and Danger of such beloved Lusts is so much the greater, because Men are apt to flatter themselves with a vain Hope, that a few Spots will be easily over-looked in the Crowd of good Actions, which give a Grace and Beauty to their Lives. They think it hard, the Reward of so many Virtues should

before the Queen.

7

should be lost for the sake of One Vice; S E R M.
and seem to fancy, that Almighty God I.
will admit them to compound with him,
and buy off One Commandment with the
satisfying of Another. This is very leg-
ible in their Behaviour, though they
are ashamed to speak it out: And there-
fore, I shall now endeavour to undeceive
all favourable Opinions of such a partial
Obedience, by considering the Necessity
of applying our selves sincerely to keep
All God's Commandments, as ever we
hope to enter into Life.

I. AND *First*, we cannot enter into it,
as that signifies undertaking the Gospel
Covenant, faithfully and effectually, with-
out such an universal Obedience. The
young Man before us had observed, and
continued long in, many excellent Duties;
and yet, upon the Refusal of One proposed
to him afresh, he was rejected, as unquali-
fied for a Follower of Christ. The good
Actions of his Life past, were by no means
lost upon our Blessed Saviour; for St.
Mark acquaints us, that *Jesus beholding* Mark x.
21.
him, loved him. But still, there was a
Canker at the Bottom, a Spirit of Cove-
nances

8 *A SERMON preach'd*

S E R M. *toufnefs and Love of the World, which*
 I. *could by no means digest that hard Say-*
ing, Go sell that thou hast, and give to
the Poor. This made him an eminent,
 but a most unhappy Instance, of what
 we often find our great Master taking
 such Pains to inculcate; and particularly,
 Luke xiv. 33. *Whosoever he be of you,*
that forsaketh not all that he hath, he can-
not be my Disciple. The short of which,
 and of all other Texts of the like Nature,
 is this: That our Lord will never endure,
 we should set up any separate or contend-
 ing Interests against him: If we pretend
 to be his, he expects to have us entire,
 and without a Rival. And this Integrity
 of ours must be manifested by sacrificing
All, even our dearest Inclinations, by
 foregoing *All*, even our most engaging
 Interests, whenever *Providence* orders
 Matters so, that these come in Competi-
 tion with him and his Commands, and
 our Obedience and they can no longer
 stand together.

2. T H E same is necessary, *Secondly*, in
 order to our obtaining eternal Happiness;
 for, since the Law was established with a
 * *Curse*

* *Curſe* upon every one that continueth not S E R M.
in all Things written therein, to do them; I.
this cuts off all Hopes of Heaven, when *Gal.iii.10.
grounded upon ſuch an Obedience, as
ſhall preſume to diſpenſe with any parti-
cular Precept contained in it. And, al-
though we are taught, that the Goſpel
was intended to ſoften and abate the Ri-
gour of the Law, yet will not that do us
any Service at all in the preſent Caſe : It
makes a ſure Proviſion indeed for For-
giveneſs upon Repentance ; it treats us
gently, and uſes great Tenderneſs to the
Infirmities of human Nature, to which
the Law ſhew'd little or no Compaſſion;
but it gives no Man Licence to tranſ-
greſs wilfully, nor preaches up the leaſt
Indulgence to any known Sin. And
therefore, in this Reſpect, the Curſe con-
tinues ſtill in full Force : And St. *James*
has proved it muſt needs do ſo, by that
remarkable Paſſage of his Epiſtle, *Who- Chap. ii.*
ſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, and 10, 11.
yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of
all. For he that ſaid, Do not commit
Adultery, ſaid alſo, do not Kill; now if
thou commit no Adultery, yet if thou
Kill,

SERM. *Kill, thou art become a Transgressor of*
 I. *the Law.*

MEN may flatter Themselves, and impose upon Others, with I know not what imaginary Notions of *Mortal* and *Venial* Sins; and it is very pleasant to observe, how the Doctors of that Church, which maintains these Distinctions, shift and double, to deliver themselves from this Text. But the Apostle evidently shews, that the Authority of the Lawgiver is that which binds the Law upon us; that the Contempt of that Authority is the Thing to be accounted for; and if that be once violated, it matters very little, whether it be done in this or that particular Instance; For though some Crimes be more heinous, and some less so; yet Obedience or Disobedience is not to be measured so much by the Quality of the Actions, as by the Regard or Disregard to the Will of our Superiors. And since our Lord's Pleasure is signified by *All* his Laws, it is sufficient to condemn us, that we wilfully neglect *Any*. It will become us therefore to look upon every Command as armed with
 Thunder;

before the Queen.

11

Thunder; Not to receive God's Laws SERM.
nicely and humourſomely, juſt as our Pa- I.
lates ſtand to them; but to conſider our
ſelves in a State of abſolute Subjection,
at no Liberty to chuſe our own Terms,
but obliged to take them together as they
lie, and ſubmit to All that is ſet before
us.

THE practical Reflections, which natu-
rally flow from this firſt Head, among
others, are ſuch as Theſe: That Men
may arrive at great Degrees of Juſtice
and common Honeſty, and yet not come
up to the Character of *good Chriſtians*:
That thoſe are falſe Meaſures, and moſt
unfaithful Comforts, by which we uſe
to ſupport our ſelves, upon the Account
of not being groſſly and ſcandalouſly
wicked: That it is an eaſy and a very
common Thing, to deceive not only the
World, but our own Souls too, with
zealous Inclinations, and fair Appear-
ances of Holineſs: And, that the great,
the only Tryal of a Man is, when his
darling Boſom-Vice comes to be encoun-
tered. This is the tender Part, which ſo
ſeldom endures to be touched: Againſt
this

SERM. This we very hardly admit any Reproof,
 I. but soften and accommodate every Argument to its Advantage: And though we may be in other Cases disposed to a ready Compliance, are yet apt to hold This fast at any rate; and ever pleading *Naaman's Exemption, in One Thing the Lord pardon thy Servant*: And yet, as oft as Men do thus turn their own Carvers, when they pick and parcel out their Duty, stick to one Part, and throw away the rest; that this is the ready Course to destroy all the Power of Christianity upon their Consciences, and to distinguish themselves at last into the Pit of Hell.

II. SECONDLY, A Man keeps the Commandments as he ought, only then, when he keeps them in their true Perfection, and that more spiritual refined Sense to which Christianity hath exalted them. To this Purpose some understand the Place before us; as if the Young Man quite mistook the Nature of the Commands, who so confidently profess himself a constant Observer of them, and yet was found wanting in that great Duty
 of

of Charity, which is the very Life and S E R M.
Substance of the whole Law. And there- I.
fore our Lord, to rectify his Error, pro-
poses such a Condition to him, as might
intimate, that no Man hath in truth
kept those Commandments, who is not
in a continual Disposition to do all the
Good he can. Not to reproach human
Nature, nor be a Scandal to the Charac-
ter Men bear, or the Religion they pro-
fess; To abstain from gross Evils and
palpable Injustice, might pass for some
sort of Excellence under a more imper-
fect Dispensation; but with Christians
it seems this ought to be esteemed a very
small Thing. It is expected, They should
improve the Rules of Living, and by
becoming bright Examples of Virtue and
Goodness, *adorn the Doctrine of Christ
in all Things*, and reflect Honour back
again upon God, and their most holy
Profession. Thus much is undenia-
bly to be gathered from our Saviour's
Sermon on the Mount, from several of
his Discourses with the *Pharisees*, and
more particularly from his summing up our
whole *Duty*, in those two comprehensive
Virtues,

14 *A SERMON preach'd*

SERM. Virtues, the *loving God with all our Heart*, and *our Neighbour as our selves*.

I.

For Love is a generous Principle, never grudges its Favours, or distributes its Services sparingly, but strives continually to do more and more, and thinks the most that can be done little enough. And the want of this it is, that makes Men so niggardly in Point of Duty; so careful to stick to the very Letter of the Command, as if they were driving a hard Bargain with Almighty God, and thought it their Wisdom to be as sharp in Point of Exchange, and to purchase Heaven as cheap as possibly they can. Too many of us read our Bibles, as some crafty People do the Statute-Book, with a Design not to do as much, but as little, of their Duty as may be. They learn to cavil, and play subtilly upon Words and Forms, and instruct themselves chiefly where the Penalties lie, to see how far they may be disobedient and troublesome, without falling under the Lash of the Law. When therefore we have considered, of what Reputation such pretended Honesty ought to be among Men; we cannot

cannot but discern, how such a kind of Christianity is like to be accepted by the great Searcher of Hearts ; and how far they fall short of a true Gospel-Obedience, who are always afraid of being over-reach'd, or paying God more than his strict Due, and take Sanctuary in the Words of the Command, without a just Regard had to the Purpose and Perfection of it.

S E R M
I.
~~~~~

AND what Success such Men must look for, as to their eternal Recompence, our Lord's Account of the last Judgment abundantly informs us. We read in the Twenty fifth of *St. Matthew*, that *feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked*, and other good Offices to the Miserable and Indigent, are the Things, upon which all our Fates must turn at that great Day. And if this be the Issue Men shall be concluded by ; then it is most evident, that our Obedience is required, according to the most exalted and spiritual Sense of the Law ; for those Duties are no part of the Letter of it, nor any otherwise enjoined in the Ten Commandments, than as Charity, which is the End of the Commandment,

# 16 *A SERMON preach'd*

SERMON. ment, obliges us to become useful and  
 I. beneficial, and to lay out our selves and  
 all our Powers liberally, for the Honour  
 of God, and the Benefit of Mankind.

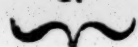
AND now give me leave to put you  
 in mind, that this second Head presents  
 all *You*, to whom the Providence of God  
 hath given Prosperity and Power to do  
 good, with a true State of your own  
 Case; and directs you how to make a  
 sure Tryal of the Sincerity of your Hearts,  
 and the Ground of your Hopes for the  
 next World. That your Honours are  
 not the Reward of Iniquity, nor your  
 Riches the Price of Oppression and Ex-  
 tortion, are very comfortable Reflections  
 indeed; and it were much to be wished,  
 that every great and wealthy Man could  
 apply them to himself: But yet the Ru-  
 ler in the Gospel seems to have had a  
 Title to all these Comforts; and still you  
 see he was not thought fit, either for Chris-  
 tianity or Heaven. There is another  
 most important Enquiry behind about  
 these Matters; not only by what Methods  
 they have been got, but in what Manner  
 they are employed. The Orphans and  
 Widows

Widows may cry for Redress, and they S E R M.  
may cry for Relief too, and we must not I.  
stop our Ears to their Wants, any more  
than to their Injuries: The Tears of the  
Distressed should never fall in vain; for if  
we owe them no Satisfaction, yet Mercy  
and Compassion we do; and no Man is  
so much Proprietor of what he calls his  
own, that he can, without Sin and In-  
justice, shut up his Bowels from them that  
have Need. If we will pursue our Duty  
to its just Heights; to be useless and un-  
profitable in the World, is to cease to be  
Innocent. Our Virtue consists not so  
much in doing no Ill, as in doing abun-  
dance of Good; in enlarging our Hearts,  
and opening our Hands; in making the  
best of our Station in the World; that is,  
in dedicating our Selves and Services en-  
tirely to God, and becoming Ornaments  
to Religion, and Blessings to One another,  
as illustrious and diffusive, as our Con-  
dition and Opportunities will suffer us to  
be.

SUCH is the Nature, such the Necessity,  
of the second Qualification required  
in our Obedience. All which is yet more  
C strongly

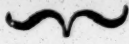


SERMON. strongly enforced by that which follows  
 I. in the Third Place,



III. THAT a Man keep the Commandments out of a religious Principle, and upon this Consideration, That they are the Commands of God.

THE Motives, upon which any Thing is done, are of so great Importance, that there can be no just Distinction between Virtue and Vice without them. These are the Springs that set the Engine first on work; and the Rules of Mechanism hold thus far in Morals as well as Nature, that, unless They be regular, all the Motions from them must needs be vicious and exorbitant. A Man may be liberal to the Poor out of Charity, and he may be so out of Ostentation too; He may be temperate in Obedience to some natural Antipathies, or to favour a weak Constitution; He may be just for Reputation, frugal and diligent for the sake of Wealth, or devout to be seen of Men: And, how highly soever these Persons may deserve to be commended for their Prudence, yet sure all this will  
 amount

amount to but very little Religion. For S E R M.  
that is in truth only then, when we go- I.  
vern our selves by the Love of God, and   
the Equity of his Laws; not by Rules  
of worldly Wisdom, and little indirect  
Ends propos'd from a holy Life, which  
would be no better than Trick and Pre-  
tence at the Bottom, and not so properly  
the serving God as our Selves. In such  
Cases our Actions resemble goodly Chil-  
dren born of ungracious Parents, which  
sometimes prove useful and excellent  
Persons themselves, though their Descent  
were but scandalous or mean: for thus  
the Vain-glorious Man's Distributions are  
not the less beneficial to the World that  
partakes of them; however that ill Prin-  
ciple may lose all the Merit to the Per-  
son that makes them. And so the same  
Thing in two several Men may not be the  
same; for, though in the Matter itself,  
and all its outward Appearances, there  
be no Difference; yet in the Disposition  
of the Mind, and the Cause from whence  
it proceeds, there may be a very great  
One; So great, that what is really Vir-  
tue in One Man, shall be no better than

SERM.

I.

Vice in Another. Of such Consequence it is to distinguish Things by the Principles that give them Birth, and the Ends to which they are directed; for otherwise we shall confound true Goodness, with that which is but the Shadow, and counterfeit Face of it, and overlook that best Recommendation, which is peculiar and essential to the Obedience of Faith: Now, that this of observing the Commandments out of a Religious Regard to God, is so, we cannot in Reason doubt, when it is farther considered, That no other Principle can either make good the Covenant of the Gospel here, or give a Man Title to a Reward hereafter.

I. FIRST, No other Principle can enable a Man to make good the Covenant of the Gospel here; for that undertakes for a steady Piety, which requires a fixt and steady Cause; and such is none, besides this I am treating of. It was not only a just and noble Thought, but the most pertinent Preface the Orator could use, to shew the Consequence of his Book upon the *Nature of the Gods: Haud scio, an Pietate adversus Deos sublata, fides etiam,*



*etiam, & Societas humani generis, & una* SERM  
*etiam excellentissima Virtus, Justitia* I.  
*tollatur.* Politicians might pretend to  
chain and fetter Men up by Laws, but  
the very Heathen could discover, that  
these were Fences easily broke through;  
and that if any Restraint could hold our  
unruly Passions, it must be a constant  
awful Sense of the Divine Nature. Thus  
it ever was, and thus it must needs be.  
For, when a Man is Just, purely for In-  
terest, how shall we secure his Fidelity,  
when the Condition of his Affairs hap-  
pens to change? If at any Time it may  
prove for his Advantage to be unjust,  
will not the same Principle then carry  
him to Vice, as powerfully as it now en-  
gages him to the contrary? Reputation,  
and Sense of Shame, it is plain, can only  
have Influence in Matters that come to  
publick Knowledge; and will be no Bar  
at all to Sins so private, as not to be dis-  
covered; nor to Persons so great, or so  
confirm'd in Wickedness, as not to fear  
Reproach. The Men carried on by  
eager Dispositions in their own Tem-  
per, must needs fall off, as those natural

SERMON. Warmths abate; and at best, they are  
 I. inclined but in part to Goodness; for,  
 except some few Virtues to which their  
 Complexion determines them, all the rest  
 make but very faint and cold Impressions  
 upon their Minds. And the following  
 such an *Impetus* as this, more than any  
 settled and well-weighed Judgment, I  
 take to be the very Reason, why many  
 Peoples Virtue is so fickle and uncertain;  
 and that they do not so properly forsake  
 as change their Vices, according to the  
 Alterations they feel, in the different  
 Circumstances of their Lives and Consti-  
 tutions.

BUT now a sincere Reverence for God,  
 and a conscientious Respect to our Duty, is  
 of universal Efficacy. This exalts Na-  
 ture into Grace, and Wisdom into Reli-  
 gion: This suits all Complexions of Men,  
 and all Conditions of Life; it meets with  
 our most secret Corruptions, and pursues  
 them into the Dark; it represents an ob-  
 serving Eye, that watches our Closets,  
 and our Beds: None, even the proudest  
 of the Sons of *Adam*, are above its  
 Checks; and but Few, if any, of the  
 most

most harden'd Wretches are quite past them. 'Tis *This* alone therefore, which must render our Conversations equal, and regular, and always consistent with themselves: For all that a Man possesseth with this Principle hath to do, is to consider what is most agreeable to God's good Pleasure and Direction; to take no Measures from his Own Inclinations and Interests, ( which was the fatal Error of the young Man in my Text, ) but to sacrifice all to the Will and Honour of his God; to keep on his Duty with unshaken Resolutions; Resolutions, supported by an humble Confidence, that his pious Endeavours shall be graciously accepted, and abundantly recompenced. Such an Obedience as *This*, is true Religion, and all else is but Intrigue and Design; And therefore such a Confidence as *This*, is true Christian Faith; but, upon other Terms, it is in no Degree better than Boldness and Presumption. For,

2. SECONDLY, No Principle but that of doing our Duty with Regard to God, who commanded us, can give a Man Title to a Reward hereafter. Our Sa-



S E R M. viour, in the Sixth of St. *Matthew*,  
 I. speaking of such as *give Alms*, and *Pray*,  
 and *Fast*, with a Design to be taken notice of, and commended for so doing, tells us with some sort of Solemnity, This is all they are to expect. *Verily, I say unto you, they have their Reward*: Their Reward! that is, what they proposed to themselves for the End of such Actions, when they did them; and so are to look upon this as full Payment, since they thought the Duties worth undertaking at so low a Price. The Case is much the same, with those that are temperate merely for their Health, or diligent and just for Reputation and Convenience: A sound Constitution, and a florid Old Age, plentiful Fortunes, and Credit, and Countenance in the World, are properly the Reward of these Persons, and all they have any just Pretence to. For there is a great deal of Reason to believe, that the Retributions at the last Day will proceed upon the same eternal Rules of Equity, which our Returns to one another are founded upon now. We think our selves obliged, not so much by *Events* as *Intentions*;

entions; and that we ought to proportion our *Thanks* accordingly. If a Friend labour sincerely in my Interests, and cannot be successful; his Inclination and Endeavour hath to Me the Merit of a Performance: But if a Man, in prosecuting his own private Advantage, by some providential Turn of Affairs, find it necessary for his Own sake to do Me a Kindness; I rejoice in the Benefit indeed; but, strictly speaking, I owe him no Thanks; because my Gain was quite beside his main Purpose, and Himself was the only Person intended to be the better for it. Thus God hath promised to reward the mere Disposition and Good-will to serve Him, though our Power of effecting it do not in all Points answer our Desires. But the specious Actions of Hypocrites shall meet with no Regard from Him; for, if they did in some Degree contribute to his Glory, and the good of Men, and so may seem to have some Colour of a Plea, yet these Effects were occasional and accidental only, with Respect to the Doers, and the least Part of their Design. Their Avarice, or Vain-glory, or whatever else  
it

S E R M.  
I.  
~

SERM. it were, that moved them to affect such  
 I. Appearances of Virtue, hath received Satisfaction already in this World: And therefore, when they come to demand more Wages in the next, what should hinder the great Master of the Vineyard from answering Them, as he does the murmuring Labourer in the Parable? *Friend, I do thee no Wrong; Didst not thou agree with me for so much? Take that is thine, and go thy way.*

THIS *Third* Head, well weighed, would furnish us with excellent Rules, for the passing a Judgment both upon our own Actions, and those of other Men. In Our own Case, to be exceeding critical and severe; as not contenting our selves with that outward Face of Goodness, which we may know to be but a Disguise, though so artificially put on, that the World cannot see through it. In other Mens, to shew our selves always charitable and tender, as not being able to discern *Their* Intentions; and considering, that even Errors and Miscarriages may sometimes proceed from such an honest and unaffected Simplicity of Mind,

as



as GOD, who sees it, may think fit S E R M.  
graciously to allow for ; and therefore it I.  
will ill become Us, who see it not, ri-  
gorously to condemn.

BUT that, which I principally intend from  
this Point, with regard to the more imme-  
diate Occasion and particular Design of  
my Text, is, to observe of what Consi-  
deration the Advantages of the present  
Life are to the Practice of Christianity,  
and what Place they deserve in our Affec-  
tions and Esteem. Plenty and Honour,  
and Health and Success in our Affairs,  
are the common and natural Results of  
Justice, and Temperance, and Industry:  
And This condemns our neglect of Duties,  
so agreeable every way, both to our Rea-  
son and our Interest. But then, these  
Blessings are not the constant Lot of every  
good Man, nor any where promised to all  
such in kind ; and therefore, tho' we may  
make them a Partial and Conditional, yet  
*This* forbids us to propose them, for the  
Only, or the Chief End of a virtuous  
Conversation. But eternal Life is inden-  
ted for expressly ; and therefore This is  
the only Thing worth our aiming at :  
This

SERMON. This is what we can depend upon, and  
 I. all the rest are thrown in as Over-Measure. *Seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness first, and after that we are allowed to desire and expect, that all these Things shall be added unto us.* God hath provided a sufficient Recompence for our Pains in Another World, though he should deny us these Privileges of Holiness in the Present: So that we must receive these, as Accessions to the main Heap; and confess it the Abundance of his Grace, if he suffer us to enjoy them; we are to value them, only as so many Earnests now paid down in hand, for the encouraging our Duty, and sure Pledges of a more precious Reward hereafter.

4. THERE remains yet the *Fourth* and last Qualification of our Obedience to be consider'd, which is, That a Man persevere in *keeping the Commandments*, and (as our Vow in Baptism expresses it) *walk in the same all the Days of his Life.*

AND *This* Particular is a necessary Consequence of those that went before. For, whatever Discouragements can tempt

us to fall from our own Stedfastness, are S E R M.  
by Them already provided against. The I.  
Commands of God are (as I have shewn)  
more strongly recommended by the Plea-  
sures and Privileges of the Virtues they  
enjoin; but they do not derive their  
binding Power from thence, and there-  
fore all Matters of this kind are of a se-  
cond and subordinate Consideration. For,  
as nothing is a Law to us, meerly for  
being profitable or convenient; so nothing  
can cease to be a Law to us, by happen-  
ing to be otherwise. GOD expects, we  
should be obstinately Good, and make  
the inviolable Constancy of our Love for  
Him and Holiness, give Testimony to  
the Zeal and to the Truth of it. And,

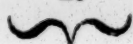
I. THIS must needs be required to  
compleat Mens Obedience at present,  
because there can be no other sure Me-  
thod of judging of their Integrity. The  
Force of natural Conscience, the Probity  
of the Temper and Inclinations, and the  
Advantages of Goodness now given in  
hand, are so powerful, that even very  
bad Men do many commendable Things  
upon these Accounts. And again, The  
Cor-



SERM.

I.

Corruptions of human Nature are so prevalent ; its Frailties so many ; the Temptations that attack it, so assiduous, and so strong ; that good Men sometimes feel dreadful Interruptions ; and the Lustre of the best Lives is often sullied and eclipsed with dark Blemishes, and great Imperfections. Since then in every one there meets such a Mixture of Good and Bad, and that no Man is either perfectly Holy, or exquisitely Wicked, without some Alloy ; it follows, that there can be no Safety in pronouncing of any Body's Virtue, otherwise than from the main Scope and constant Tenure of the Conversation. For although some Actions of a contrary Quality may mingle themselves in the Crowd ; yet the cool and settled Sense of the Soul is sufficiently discerned by a Man's general Design, and most usual Practice. Thus our Blessed Saviour, in the Parable of the Sower, under the Figure of the Stony-Ground, *which put forth indeed apace, but brought no Fruit to perfection*, rejects that forward and eager Zeal, which serves God by violent Heats and impetuous Salleys, and then hath its Turns  
of



of languishing and cooling as fast again. This ill Success he ascribes to *want of Earth*, that is, serious Consideration, and an establish'd Sense of one's Duty. Thus also he compares the Man, that hears his Saying, and does them, to a House built upon a Rock, and if the Winds overturn, or the Waves wash him off; this, he tells us, is an Argument he did not stand upon a sound Bottom. All which confirms the Necessity of persisting in Goodness; and, that Constancy is the only Mark of a Man's Proceeding upon a firm and truly Religious Principle.

2. THE Same must be said, *Lastly*, for the Expectation of a Reward to come. For God hath order'd Matters so, that the State in which a Man ends his Days, is what the whole of his Life must be finally determin'd by. When Christians are commanded to *Walk* in God's Laws, this intimates, that they must be continually advancing; that either to *lose ground*, or but to *stand still*, is a Fault. And the Comparisons of a Race, a Fight, and the like, make it plain, that the *Prize* is only for them who come up to the Goal,  
and

SERMON. and the *Triumph* to those that fight it out to the last, and gain a compleat Victory. And sure this is a Method, most Happy for Us, and most Reasonable in its self.

HAPPY for Us! For, God help us! what would become of Men, if there were no Place left for Repentance, and a second Thought; no forgetting and foregoing the Lusts and Follies of Youth, or the more deliberate Offences of our riper Years? Whereas now, the Promise of Pardon belongs to a sincere Reformation, let that come when it will: So that if we do but repent heartily, and in good earnest, we can never be too late.

AND most Reasonable in it self! For a Man's last Judgment in Religion, and his last Will in Law, do both alike revoke and disannul all that went before; Because they are presumed to proceed upon more mature Consideration. And this coming to a better Sense of Things is the very Account God gives of the Equity of his Proceedings, in pardoning Sinners, without setting any Limits to his Mercy: *At what time soever the wicked Man turneth away*



*away from his Wickedness that he hath* S E R M.  
*committed, and doth that which is lawful* I.  
*and right, he shall save his Soul alive:*

Because he considereth, and *turneth away*  
*from all his Transgressions*, therefore *he*  
*shall surely live, he shall not die.*

B U T then it ought to be remember'd  
too, that the same Argument must needs  
hold as strong, for the Condemnation of  
all such as fall into vicious Courses, after  
the Benefits of a religious Education, and  
the long-continued Knowledge and con-  
firmed Practice of Virtue. For these  
Men arraign their first Principles of Fol-  
ly, and renounce all they had done be-  
fore: They throw up Their Part of the  
Covenant, and by that Act release God  
of His. And this last perverse Choice  
defeats and cancels their past good Works,  
and loses all the Pains, and all the Fruits  
of them: As he, that is Shipwreck'd in  
the very Port, perishes there, as sure as in  
the midst of Rocks and Seas; and then  
the Calamity is but the more sensible,  
and the more disastrous, for coming so  
late, and undoing so many former Suc-  
cesses.

D

A N D,

# 34 A SERMON preach'd, &c.

SERM.

I.

AND, Oh! that this Consideration may inspire us all with Courage and holy Resolution, to push on our Fortunes, and pursue every Advantage in our spiritual Warfare! always remembering, that the last Engagement determines the whole Controversy; and that they must *be faithful to the End*, who expect to *receive a Crown of Life*. Which Crown God the Righteous Judge bestow upon us all, even for his own infinite Mercies, and his Son Christ Jesus his Sake. *Amen.*



SERMON



# SERMON II.

CONCERNING

## God's Deferring

TO

### Answer MENS Prayers:

Preach'd before the

### KING and QUEEN

at Whitehall, Nov. 11. 1694.



MATT. XV. 28.

*Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O Woman, great is thy Faith: Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt. And her Daughter was made whole from that very Hour.*



CONSIDERING the very precarious and depending State of Human Nature, what infinite Variety of Miseries and Wants we are all subject to, and how



# 36 A SERMON preach'd

S E R M. weak and unable the very Greatest of us  
 II. are, to supply those Wants, or prevent  
 those Miseries, or even to sustain our  
 selves under Either: Man must needs be,  
 of all Creatures the most disconsolate  
 and forlorn, were there not some higher  
 and better Refuge, than his own Strength  
 and Wisdom, provided for him to have  
 recourse to. Our Maker therefore, who  
 best knew our Necessities, hath com-  
 manded us to take Sanctuary in his good  
 Providence, and expressed the tenderest  
 Care of us: He hath directed, that we  
 should *pour out our Hearts before him,*  
 and *shew him all our Trouble*; and hath  
 encouraged the Performance of this Duty,  
 with gracious Promises of Pity and Re-  
 dress, and a constant Readiness to hear,  
 and help, and do, as he sees most expe-  
 dient for us. But because His Thoughts  
 are not always as Our Thoughts, and  
 the Love of a Father is tempered with  
 the Wisdom of a God; from hence it  
 comes to pass, that many Times what we  
 ask is not granted at all; and at other  
 Times, it is not granted so soon as we de-  
 sire and expect it. Now in order to the  
 com-

## *before the King and Queen.* 37

composing our Minds under such Delays SER M.  
and Disappointments as these, and that we II.  
may not rashly suspect God of Unfaith-  
fulness to his Word, it will be necessary to  
consider the Reasons of those Dispensa-  
tions to us. And Reasons there always  
are, did we but duly attend to them,  
abundantly sufficient to convince us, that  
neither is He unjust or unkind, nor We  
neglected or forgotten.

THE absolute Denial of our Prayers is  
capable of an easy Resolution, because  
we often *ask Stones instead of Bread,*  
and *Serpents instead of Fishes*: That is, Matt. vii.  
9, 10.  
we mistake our own Good, do not see  
far enough into the Nature and Conse-  
quences of Things, and must therefore  
in Reason look upon it as an Act of Kind-  
ness to be denied: Since our Father de-  
nies us, only because he loves us; and  
because he understands better, and chuses  
better for us than we do for our selves.

BUT why those Things which are  
really for our Advantage, and are at length  
given us, because they are so; why these,  
I say, should yet be withheld, even  
when our Necessities are pressing; why

S E R M. those Supplications, which are themselves  
 II. acceptable, should yet be rejected and  
 discountenanced for a Season, and the  
 Anguish of our Souls increased by sad  
 Repulses: This seems to carry something  
 more of Difficulty in it. For in such a  
 Case it is natural enough for a Man to  
 argue thus in his own Breast: " If the  
 " Subject of my Petitions be not for the  
 " Glory of God, and my own Good,  
 " then is it not proper for Him to grant,  
 " or Me to receive at all; and the most  
 " solicitous Application will not, ought  
 " not to obtain it. But if it conduce to  
 " both these two great Ends, ( as to be  
 " sure it does one way or other, because  
 " it is granted at last, ) why does not  
 " then this divine Father hasten the Fe-  
 " licity of his Children? why does not  
 " his Goodness double the Favour, by  
 " giving speedily what his Wisdom sees  
 " fit to give, though later, and more  
 " slowly? "

THAT this is sometimes the Method  
 of God's dealing with Mankind, is par-  
 ticularly manifested by the most re-  
 markable Instance of a *Canaanitish*  
 Woman,



## *before the King and Queen.* 39

Woman, described here at large, from S E R M.  
the One and twentieth Verse, to that of II.  
my Text inclusively. She intreated no  
trifling or unnecessary Favour, but one,  
upon which the whole Quiet and Hap-  
piness of her Life depended: The Cure  
of a Child in a most deplorable Condi-  
tion; a Child, whom an evil Spirit had Ver. 22.  
got strong Possession of, and tormented to  
that Degree, that the Agonies of any  
common Sickneſs had been a Bleſſing in  
Compariſon; and the Lots of her by a  
natural Death, a moſt welcome Releate  
from inſupportable Miſery and Pain.  
The diſtorted Limbs, the violent Con-  
vulſions, the ſudden Throws and Pangs,  
the Terrors and Diſtractions, of them who  
labour and languish under theſe Poſſeſſi-  
ons, are more diſmal than Words can ex-  
preſs, and a Spectacle too gaily and aſto-  
niſhing for human Nature to bear. If  
the Greatneſs of any Calamity could en-  
force Compaſſion, what Miſfortune could  
have a better Right to it than This? And  
who generally more apt to commiſerate  
any Affliction, than the tender and loving  
*Jeſus*? When the Centurion beſought

D 4

him

SERM.

II.

Matt. viii.

5, 6, 7.

him in behalf of his Servant only, he met his Desires half way, and immediately replied, *I will come and heal him.* But here a wretched Mother comes, whose Soul was quite overwhelm'd with Passion; she suffers in and for her Daughter, feels all Her Tortures, is shaken and oppress'd by all Her Phrensies and violent Agitations; dies every moment afresh under all Her Tearings and Foamings, and is pierced through with every cutting Shriek and Groan; all Nature works within her, and she throws herself at his Feet, with all that Disorder and Perplexity of Heart, which none but Mothers know, none but tender and afflicted Mothers can make any tolerable guess at: And yet this otherwise kind Master, contrary to his Custom, seeks cruel Excuses to put her off. She pursues him from Place to Place; allows him no Leisure to harden in; but melts him down with Tears, and deafens him with repeated Cries and Complaints. His Disciples themselves could hold out no longer, but turn Intercessors for her; so troublesome it seems was her Importunity, or so very moving her Affliction:

Verse 23.

Yet

## *before the King and Queen.* 41

Yet still HE relents not, but, with a seem- S E R M.  
ing Barbarity, upbraids her Unworthiness II.  
of his Help, and her Confidence in ex- Ver. 25, 26.  
pecting it. She takes the Hint, and Verse 27.  
urges him again and again; her Clamours  
and her Calamities will have no Denial;  
and then he yields at last; and, pleased to  
be thus vanquished, applauds and rewards  
her unwearied Zeal; does, as it were, de-  
legate a Power to Her to work the Miracle  
her self; makes Her the Disposer of his  
Gift, and the Carver of her own For-  
tunes: *Then Jesus answered and said* Verse 28.  
*unto her, O Woman, great is thy Faith:*  
*Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.* And,  
as she desired, so it was most effectually;  
she only begged that her Daughter might  
be restored to her self, and the whole  
Force of Hell was no longer strong enough  
to resist her, for *her Daughter was made*  
*whole from that very Hour.*

THE several Steps taken in this Pro-  
ceeding, and the Manner of granting at  
last, in such comprehensive Terms, and  
with so peculiar a Character of the Peti-  
tioner's Virtue, give us great Reason to  
conclude, that, as the first Refusals were  
not



SERM.

II.

not out of any real Unkindness, so the following Compliance was either occasioned, or enlarged however, by Means of that Faith, which our Lord so highly extols. And then the most effectual Course to answer the Design of this whole Passage, both with regard to the particular Case before us, and to our own Prayers in general, (of which this Case is set here as a Pattern,) will be to treat of the Words under the *Three* following Heads:

I. *First*, To assign some Reasons, why God delays giving what we ask for some Time, though he do not intend absolutely and altogether to withhold it from us.

II. *Secondly*, To shew, what Qualifications are requisite in our Prayers, to render them effectual and successful, notwithstanding, and after, such Delays. And,

III. *Thirdly*, To consider, how God's being wrought upon by Prayers so qualified,

## *before the King and Queen.* 43

lified, is consistent with the standing  
Order of Providence, and the Un-  
changeableness of the divine Na-  
ture and Counsels.

S E R M.

II.

I. FIRST, *I am to render some account, why God delays the giving what we ask for some Time, tho' he do not intend (as the Event of this Story plainly proves) absolutely, and altogether, to withhold it from us.* And of This we may gather two very substantial Reasons, from the Case now under our Consideration.

I. THE *First* is, *That these Delays enhance and add to the Blessing, when we do at last receive it.* The Satisfaction Men take in what they possess, is not always proportioned, either to the real Value of the Things themselves, or the Want the Persons have of them, or the Advantages they reap from them; but depends chiefly upon the Sense and Disposition of their own Minds. The most valuable Enjoyments are sometimes utterly lost and thrown away, because they are slighted and overlooked. Our Necessities

S E R M.

II.

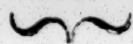
cessities are not always duly understood; and when they are not so, the most seasonable Reliefs will be sure to fall very low in our Esteem: So that to give a true Relish to Any Happiness, the principal and most necessary Work, is to possess the Soul with a right Notion of its own indigent State, and the urgent Occasion we have for it. For, according to this Notion, our Resentments will be more or less grateful, and the Gift more or less welcome, when we have attained it. This seems to be the very Reason, why those Blessings, which lie in common to all the World, are so little set by; because scarce Any body considers the Benefit of That, which is open and easy to Every body: It comes without our Seeking, and therefore it passes by without our Observing too. The Sun shines alike on the Evil and on the Good; and the Rain descends as liberally on the Unjust as on the Just. The kindly Returns of Day and Night, and Heat and Cold, seem to be fix'd by Laws of Nature, and are usually tempered in Order and Measure. And though the Advantage of these Things



*before the King and Queen.* 45

S E R M.

II.



Things be unſpeakable; yet, becauſe it is univerſal and uniform, we grow wanton in the Enjoyment, and are but very lightly affected with the Convenience of them to us. And, if this be the Condition of thoſe Bleſſings, that are abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve the World, and ſuſtain this Life, of which we are ſo immoderately fond; how much more may we be expected to diſeſteem thoſe Others, which are only additional Comforts, and tend not to the Support, ſo much as the Delight, of Mankind?

HEREIN then is one great Good of Afflictions, ſuch as juſtifies both the Wiſdom and the Kindneſs of God in appointing them; that they help us to diſcern ſomething Particular in our own Caſe, awaken us into a Senſe of our own Wants, and, by the Deliverance recommend God's Goodneſs infinitely more to us, than uninterrupted Proſperity could ever have done. Health is the ſame in its ſelf, when conſtant, as when reſtored; and Preſervation the very ſame, when nothing hath threaten'd our Safety: But yet every Man naturally entertains a Recovery from

SERM.

II.

from Sickneſs, and an Eſcape from Danger, with a more ſenſible Pleaſure, than if thoſe Difficulties had never happened to him; and feels his Soul more powerfully wrought upon to be thankful, than if he had never found Occaſion to fear or to complain at all. And all this ſeems to depend upon One Cauſe, which is, That in this Body we lead Lives of Senſe, as well as Reaſon; and cannot therefore conſider Things always abſtractedly, and as they are in their own Nature, but muſt judge of them as they appear to Us: And thoſe Appearances are generally but cold and feeble, except ſome viſible Change of our Affairs alter the preſent Habit of our Minds, and leave a ſtrong and lively Impreſſion upon us. But then, the longer ſuch Impreſſions laſt, the lower we are reduced, and the greater the Alteration is; the better ſtill ſhall we taſte and value that Mercy, which reſtores us to our former Eaſe and Happineſs again.

Now if this be the Condition of thoſe Things, which make the Subject of our Prayers, it muſt needs be ſo with our  
Prayers

*before the King and Queen.* 47

Prayers themselves too. For One great SERM.  
II.  
End of Praying is to publish our Wants, and to seek Relief and Supplies suitable to them; to bewail our Miseries, and to implore the divine Favour and Assistance. And, because this is sometimes done coldly, and of course only, God holds his Hand, till we feel the Smart, and are brought to a due Sight of our Circumstances, by being pinched under them. Thus he aggravates and prolongs our Sorrows, 'tis true; but withal, he magnifies the Mercy, which turns our Heaviness into Joy: A Joy, which we should either not have felt, or have felt but very slightly; if the Deliverance had prevented, or met our first Wishes, and the Burthen had never gauled, or weighed us down at all. So necessary is it, according to the present Constitution of human Nature, that Men should be taught Wisdom at their own Expence; and that God should sometimes restrain the Overflowings of his Bounty for our good: That so, by hindring his Blessings from becoming easy, he may prevent that greater Mischief, the Sin of  
their



# 48 *A SERMON preach'd*

SERM. their becoming cheap and contemptible,  
 II. to us.

THIS single Consideration of working us up to right Apprehensions, and a just Estimate of the Benefits Prayer obtains for us, is sufficient to acquit God of any Unkindness, and reconcile us to all the Difficulties and Delays we can meet with from him. He gives as he pleases, and he knows best, when, as well as what to give: He defers not because he grudges the Gift, but only waits the most proper Season; that he may give when it will be most acceptable, and when we are best prepared to receive, and to relish, and to improve by the Favour.

BUT yet this is not all. For, when I say, that such Delays add to the Blessing, my Meaning is, not only that they heighten it in our Opinion, but that they add to it in Reality, and procure us a greater Plenty and Proportion. For Prayer being a Duty, which God hath commanded, and wherein he delights, the very performing it as we ought, gives us a fresh Title to what we ask: So that, whatever Considerations besides might recom-

## *before the King and Queen.* 49

recommend us to his good Graces, this S E R M.  
enforces all the rest. He hath solemnly II.  
engaged himself to the Good Man, and Matt vii.  
made the answering his Requests a Debt :

And He is not only Just, but Generous in  
his Payments ; None of our Concerns lie  
dead in His Hands ; and, if the Returns be  
slow, it is only, that they may be made  
at last with greater Interest. As the  
Gospel furnishes us no where with an Ex-  
ample of so many Repulses, as this Wo-  
man of *Canaan* suffered : so does it  
rarely, if ever, set before us an Instance  
of so large a Commendation, joined with  
so comprehensive a Grant. In Other  
Cases we meet with such Answers as these,

*Receive thy Sight, Thy Son liveth ; I*  
*will come and heal him,* and the like. Luke xviii

But here the Words resemble those of the 42.  
Angel to *Jacob*, *Thou hast Power with* John iv.  
*God, and with Man, and hast prevailed.* 7.  
Gen xxxii.

Our Saviour seems to personate a Man  
conquered by some superior Force ; and  
to acknowledge, that no Spoils can be  
too rich for so gallant a Victory. The  
usual Way of consenting, it seems, was  
too narrow and too mean ; and therefore

E. he

SERMON. he resigns up himself to her Disposal,  
 II. and cries out with an Air of Extasy and  
 ~~~~~ Admiration, *Ob Woman ! great is thy  
 Faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*

AND, that this is no special Case, or
 particular Privilege, but what every de-
 vout Person hath a Right to expect, we
 are assured by that Parable, in the Eleventh
 of St. *Luke*, made use of by our Saviour,
 to encourage Earnestness and Perseverance
 in Prayer. For though the Friend there
 would not lend his Neighbour three
 Loaves, upon the Account of any Kind-
 ness or old Acquaintance that was be-
 twixt them ; yet *because of his Importu-
 nity*, (says the Text,) he was content to
 rise out of his Bed, and *give him as many
 as he had Occasion for.* The Design
 whereof is to assure us, that even Asking
 itself hath something of Virtue, and
 much of Efficacy in it. And surely we
 are then of all Creditors most happy,
 when He, who in marvellous Condescen-
 sion is pleased to call his Mercies our
 Due, does not only pay us Use for them,
 while he keeps them in his Hands, but
 loves to be often call'd upon for Payment ;
 nay,

before the King and Queen. 51

may, puts our very Importunity into the S E R M.
Account also, when we press hard for II.
That, which nothing but his own free
Grace could in any Sense have made
Ours.

2. S E C O N D L Y, Another excellent Reason for God's deferring to answer our Prayers, is, That he may by this means improve our Virtue, and illustrate it to the World, and so both make, and shew us in some good Degree fit and worthy to receive the Blessings we pray for. He deals with us as a discreet and tender Father, and suits the Methods of his Providence to our truest Advantage. Now this is the Reformation of our bad Habits, correcting the Perverseness of our Dispositions, and consulting which Way we may best advance in Innocency and Goodness. Where a ready Condescension to our Requests will conduce most to His Glory and Our Good; he gives readily and liberally: Where an absolute Refusal will contribute more to these great Ends; it is an Act of Love and Goodness, as well as an Instance of his Wisdom, to deny us: And, where the suspending our

SERMON. Mercies for a Time will be most beneficial, there we are put off till a more convenient Day. Thus Almighty God proceeds always upon the same Principle, which We ought to go upon, in Respect of these worldly Enjoyments: And that is, That Health and Sicknes, Prosperity and Affliction, Successes and Disappointments, are but so many Instruments put into our Hand to do good with: That the most valuable of them all are yet then most truly and only valuable, when they are made Occasions of promoting our Virtue: And that, even the most distasteful Accidents, when they better our Minds, become Blessings, exceeding great Blessings. Since then all These are but so many several Sorts of Discipline, and constantly intended, either to amend, or to exercise us; we have no Reason to repine at the Means, provided they do but conduct us to the End that sanctifies them. And, since we are under the Care of One, who is wiser than We, and understands our Tempers, and our Necessities, much better than our selves do; let us leave it to Him to chuse, both his own
Times,

before the King and Queen. 53

Times, and his own Proportions; and be S E R M.
very confident, that, when We have done II.
our Part, he will not fail to give, not
only the Thing that is best, but in the
Season that is best for us. Indulgent
Parents know and feel, and when it is too
late, repent the Mischief of being too
easy to their Children: And therefore
our heavenly Father, who sees the ill
Effects of such Indulgence; how froward,
and peevish, and insolent we grow, when
we are never cross'd; cures this fretful and
impatient Disposition, by using us to stay
a-while; and checks the Eagerness of
our sensual Appetite, by with-holding
sometimes what we want very much, and
most passionately desire.

Now this is an Easiness of Temper
necessary to be attained by every Chris-
tian; but attained it can never be, except
by Practice and Experience. Where we
find it in Perfection, it is a most noble
and glorious Pattern for Others to copy
after; and therefore the Dispensations that
employ it, are no less proper to exercise
the Strong, than to confirm the Weak.
Thus it was in our present Case: This

S E R M.

II.

Woman seems to have been admirably prepared, and of a Disposition that need-
ed no new forming: And therefore our
Saviour's Denials did not so much in-
crease or occasion her Virtue, as they
called it forth, and provoked her to ex-
ert it. Had her first Petition been grant-
ed, she had passed off in the common
Crowd of Beggars; and we had never
known more of her, but only that she
asked, and that she received. But the Dif-
ficulties she found in obtaining her Re-
quest, and her prudent Behaviour under
them, did not only vindicate our Lord's
Kindness to a Stranger, from all the Ca-
vils of the Captious *Jews*, but have im-
mortalized her Name in Story, and ren-
der'd her a most illustrious Example and
Encouragement to future Ages: An Ex-
ample of all those Graces, which must
conspire together to recommend our
Prayers, and render them successful.

II. AND this puts me in mind, that I
ought to hasten to my *Second* Head,
that so, having vindicated the Goodness
of God in sometimes delaying to grant, I
may

before the King and Queen. 55

may shew *what Qualifications are requisite on Our Part, to make our Prayers at last effectual, notwithstanding, and after such Delays.*

S E R M.
II.
~

NOW those which the Words, and this Relation (for to It I confine my self) give me occasion to insist upon at present, are Three, *viz. Fervency, Humility, and Perseverance.* For these are but so many Parts and Ingredients, whereof that *Faith* is compounded, which my Text so highly commends.

I. FIRST, The *Fervency* of our Prayers is necessary, to demonstrate, that we are in good Earnest, and seriously desirous of the Things we ask for. Prayer is not the Business of the Tongue, nor of the Body, but of the Mind and the Affections. And God, whose Quality it is, *to understand the inward Parts*, as well as to *know every Word in our Mouths*, will have but very little Respect to the Lips, or the Knee, if the Heart be wanting: That is, If the Supplications we prefer, be giddy and unthinking, languishing and loose. All the Vigour and Efficacy must come from within; those

SERM.

II.

pure and holy Flames, which a just Reverence for God and his adorable Excellencies, and a feeling Reflection upon our own Wants, have kindled within us. These will spread and exert themselves, and actuate the whole Mass in such a Manner, that every Part shall conspire by outward Signs, to express the inward Devotion of our Souls: But when Men pretend to approach the Throne of Grace, and do it with Coldness and Indifference; when they come into the Court and more immediate Presence of God with Disrespect, and trifle with the King of Heaven; when wandring Looks and irreverent Postures betray the Distance of their Souls and Bodies; that they neither are together, nor consider where they are; how can we expect these Men should succeed? Or if the Voice be loud, the Gesture moving, and yet the Mind some other way employed, this may be Ostentation, but Zeal it is not; and the being seen of Men, and applauded by the Spectators, is all the Reward due to such Prayers. For they are only Affectation and Pomp,
and

before the King and Queen. 57

and at the best, a solemn Passion pretty well acted.

S E R M.

II.

THINKEST Thou then, O Man, that God will hear thee, when thou hearest not thy own self? Are Words, and Sounds, and empty Noise, of such Worth, that they should incline the Majesty of Heaven, when even Men scorn and laugh at Forms, and Things by rote? And yet such are all the Prayers of a roving and uncomposed Mind. For without Attention, and Thought, and serious Desire, the Labour is only that of the Lip, and so much Air broken into Sound, without any Sense or Signification at all. Thou goest to publick Theatres, and there seest Spectacles Tragical and full of Horror; prosperous Villany, and injured Innocence; Calamities, and Tortures, and Deaths, enough to soften the hardest Heart: Yet not one Tear falls, because you know very well, all this is but Shadow and Shew only: And art thou so vain to suppose, that God will be moved with a *Scene* of Devotion, with an empty *Representation* of a Prayer? Shall not He distinguish between
Reality

SERM.

II.

so absurd, to reward thy counterfeit Ad-
dresses? Formality in Truth is in some
Respects worse than Coldness: This neg-
lects God, but That plainly mocks and
affronts him. So impossible is it, that
any outward Testimonies of Devotion,
though never so decent and proper, should
be of any Value at all for their Own
Sakes. And for this Reason, possibly,
our Prayers are call'd in Scripture *a Sa-
crifice*, and *an Incense*; because they are
render'd acceptable, by the self-same Me-
thods that those were wont to be. It is
the Burning that creates the sweet-smel-
ling Savour; and it must be the Earnest-
ness and Warmth of our Prayers, that
alone can make Them *come up as Incense*
before the Throne of God.

2. THE next Qualification requisite in
our Prayers is *Humility*; and of This
we have many remarkable Instances in
the Person before us. The Slight our
Saviour put upon her by his Silence,
and the invidious Comparison he made be-
tween the *Jews* and Her; the bitter Re-
proach of *Dog*, and the aggravating Cir-
cumstances

verse 24.

verse 25.

verse 26.

before the King and Queen. 59

cumstances, by which he exposed her Un-
worthiness; all which were so far from
provoking her, that she received them all
with Meekness, acknowledged the Truth
of what he upbraided her with, and
frames a fresh Argument even from that
Confession. In the Quality of *Dogs* verse 27
she is contented to be reckoned, if that
would entitle her to a Dog's Portion; that
Cure of her Daughter, which, in compa-
rison of those frequent and mighty Mi-
racles, wrought in the Country of the
Jews, and for the Benefit of the *Chil-*
dren, was but as *the Crums that fall*
from the Master's Table. And herein
we have a fair Copy set us, of those
mean and vile Opinions of our selves,
with which the Majesty of Heaven and
Earth should be approached. When
Dust and Ashes, when a Creature frail,
and poor, and corruptible, is allowed
the Privilege of attending a glorious God;
what Resentments, what Behaviour can
be respectful enough to express the infi-
nite Distance? But especially, when that
Creature, so contemptible by Nature,
hath yet debased it self much worse by
Sin;

S E R M.
II.

SERMON. Sin; when it is not only poor and low,
 II. but polluted and odious in his Sight; Oh!
 what Apprehensions of the divine Fa-
 vour can be agreeable to so mighty, so
 gracious a Condescension!

ACCESS indeed we have, and we are
 Heb iv. 16. commanded to *come with Boldness to the
 Throne of Grace.* But it should always
 be remembred, that it is a Throne of
Grace; that the Seat of *Judgment*, not
 any of us are able to stand before: That
Mercy is the only Thing we can pretend
 to; and that even This is in no degree
 due to us for our own Sakes, but purely
 upon the Account of Another, who pur-
 chased it for us at the Price of his own
 Blood: That therefore we can have no
 Injury done us, because of our selves we
 have no Right, no Desert, no Claim to
 put in: That if we be passed by in Silence,
 or if we be reprov'd and checked by
 the sad Reproaches of our own Conscience,
 all this is the Effect of our own Unwor-
 thinefs: If others are preferred before us,
 and enjoy larger Measure of the Divine
 Blessings, still this is no Robbery to Us,
 nor any just Occasion to complain of a par-
 tial

before the King and Queen. 61

tial and unfair Providence. If we obtain S E R M.
our Petitions, this is indeed the Excess of II.
Bounty : If we wait long, He is Master
of his Favours, and *may do what he*
will with his own; and we are to con-
sider, that our Business is to ask a Gift,
and not to demand a Tribute. So that
every Thing, that may conduce to the
laying us low in our own Thoughts;
every Thing, that may help to speak our
Modesty, and Reverence, and Submission,
is all little enough, for Wretches so mis-
erable, so unworthy as We. And there
cannot be a greater Absurdity, than to
fly in the Face of God, and, like some
insolent Beggars, not only *grudge that*
we are not satisfied, but curse and re-
vile the Hand that detains it from us. So
did not the Mother in the Text : Instead
of fancying her self ill used, she bore
all, and improved by all the discouraging
Arguments urged against her : She made
her very Humility and Patience of Deni-
al a new Incitement to ask again : And
thus became most eminent for the other
Qualifications requisite in our Prayers,
which, I told you, is,

SERM.

II.

3. PERSEVERANCE. How necessary a Duty this is, the very Terms, in which our Saviour hath directed us to pray, are of themselves a plain and sufficient Intimation: For he who bids us *seek*, implies, that we must not leave off seeking till we have *found*: And he who commands us to *knock*, expects we should continue at the Door, till we are heard, and it *be opened* unto us. But besides that, the Parable of the Father and the Son, of the Friend and his Neighbour in Distress for Provision to entertain his Guest, and that Other of the Widow and the unjust Judge, all agree in the Necessity, and the Efficacy of this Virtue: So that as *St. Chrysostom* somewhere says, “ We must not only ask that we
 “ may receive; but we must ask for that
 “ very Reason, because we do not re-
 “ ceive: For we are often denied, only
 “ that we should ask again; and if we
 “ receive not at last, it is not owing to
 “ any Unwillingness in God, but to
 “ some Defect, some Weariness and Im-
 “ patience of Mind, in our Selves.

Mat. vii. 7.

Mat. vii.

Luke xi.

Luke xviii.

Tom. 5.

before the King and Queen. 63

IT were perhaps much more useful S E R M.
and seasonable upon this Occasion, to en- II.
quire, which Way this indefatigable Im-
portunity comes to be so well accepted:
When we find, that among Men nothing
is more troublesome and displeasing. And
the Difference seems to lie very much in
This; that in God there is no End of
Goodness, no End of Power, both which
in Men are bounded within a narrow
Compass. Too much pressing to Men
is therefore harsh and ungrateful, because
this is obliquely to reproach them; and
taxes either their Want of Inclination,
or their Want of Ability to gratify us:
But He, who is Omnipotence and Love
itself, can be subject to no such Re-
flections. Our Necessities can never ex-
haust His Stores; and His Bowels are so
tender, that he is said to *Watch over* Jer. xxxi.
Men to do them good: It is of his Boun- 28.
ty, that all our Wants are supplied; and
the very with-holding from us, where
they are not, is itself an Act of Kind-
ness. And our persisting in Prayer ar-
gues that we think so: For when Men
take it ill to be denied, they naturally
grow

SERMON. grow fullen, and disdain to use any farther Intreaties. The same Boldness and Constancy, which were immodest and blameable to a Creature, is therefore most commendable in our Addresses to God. In this Case, it is not only consistent with Modesty, but the strongest Evidence of it: For it speaks us well contented, and easy, and of a resigned Spirit; it submits to his Wisdom, and confesses his Goodness, and our own Unworthiness; when we will not suffer ourselves to be prevailed upon by Sturdiness and Despair; nor resent these Repulses with Anger and Pride; but are still satisfied to repeat and reinforce our Requests, and to wait his Own Time and good Pleasure for the accomplishing our Desires.

III. ALL that now remains to answer the Design of my Text, is, to speak something very briefly to my Third and last Head; wherein I promised to consider *how the Efficacy of Prayers, thus qualified, as you have seen, is consistent with the standing Order of Providence,*
and

before the King and Queen. 65

and the Unchangeableness of the divine S E R M.
Nature and Counsels. II.

Now by this Unchangeableness we are to understand, that God can never alter; *i. e.* he cannot cease to be what he is, nor to be diverted from any of his Perfections, so as that he should leave off to be holy, and just, and good, and wise, and the like; for *That* is his Nature, and *in it is no Variableness, neither* James 1. *Shadow of turning*: Nor can he reverse ¹⁷ what he hath positively and absolutely decreed, or be false to any of his Promises; for these are his Counsels, and they *are Yea and Amen*, fix'd immuta- 2 Cor. i. 20. bly, and stand fast for ever and ever: But these Determinations do not reach so far, as to bind up every Thing, and every Accident, in the Chains of a fatal Necessity. He hath left many See Deut. xxviii. Isa. l. 19. 20. Things at large, to be the Rewards of Mens Virtue, or the Punishment of their Wickedness. These are promised and threaten'd under certain Conditions; and as those Conditions are fulfilled or neglected, the Promise or the Threatning takes Place accordingly. So that for
F God,

66 A SERMON preach'd

SERM. God, upon Prayers and Repentance, to
 II. give Men what otherwise he would not
 have given; or to avert Those Judg-
 ments, which would certainly have over-
 taken them, if These had not come in be-
 twixt, and stopp'd the Blow, is so far from
 changing, that it is the greatest Mark of
 Truth, and Constancy to his Word; the
 most exact Way of observing those eter-
 nal Rules, which the Wisdom of Pro-
 vidence hath all along formed and pre-
 scribed to itself; the properest Accom-
 plishment of those Revelations made to
 Mankind in Scripture for their Encou-
 ragement, and which he hath there in-
 violably engaged, always to govern the
 World by.

THERE is indeed a Temper in Men, that
 affects to be courted, and flattered, and fawn-
 ed upon; and complies with the Requests
 of others, out of mean and little Ends. But
 this is the Effect of Pride, and Passion,
 and Interest; much different from those
 Condescensions of Almighty God, who,
 though he cannot be subject either to
 Weakness or Corruption, may yet be
 prevailed upon by such Methods, as be-
 come

II.

Ex. xxxii.

11---14.

Psal. cvi.

23---30.

Jeremiah

xviii. 7, 8,

9, 10.

Ezekiel

xxxviii.

13, 14,

15, 16.

before the King and Queen. 67

come a reasonable, and wise, and gene-
rous Mind. And therefore, when Men
pay the Homage due to his infinite Ma-
jesty; when they throw themselves en-
tirely upon his Goodness, *cast all their
Care upon Him, commit their Souls*, and
all their Concerns, *into His Hands*, and
that, with such reverent and strong Per-
suasions of his being a *faithful Creator*;
that no Delays, no Refusals, can tempt
them to suspect or distrust him: This is
such an Argument to help and favour
People in Distress, as every great Spirit,
every Man of Honour and common good
Nature, would think it a Fault to hold
out against. So that for God to shew
himself flexible upon such Occasions,
cannot in Reason be charged with Fickle-
ness or Levity, but is a gracious Com-
pliance upon just and reasonable Motives:
And to harden himself against the conti-
nued Cries and Complaints of Suitors
thus qualified, would much more misbe-
come the Character of Sovereign Judge,
and infinitely good Ruler of the whole
World. To conclude then in one Word:
You see, that it is impossible for Men to

S E R M.

II.

SERM.

II.

* 23d Sun-
day after
Trinity.

pray in vain, provided they do but pray as they ought, That (as the * Collect for this Day intimates) *God is our Refuge and Strength, always ready to hear the devout Prayers of his Church; and that they who ask faithfully, will not fail to obtain effectually:* Nay, that when he seems deaf to all our Applications, his Mercy is even then providing some better Thing for us; and that the slowest Grants are usually the most Plentiful and Advantageous at last. And, if the very Denial, if the very Delay, of our Prayers be for our Benefit, where can we possibly find any Objection, to discourage us in this Duty?

LET us come then, my Brethren, to the Throne of Grace; but let us come full of holy Zeal, and humble Modesty, and unshaken Perseverance: Let us lay Siege, as it were, and make a close Pursuit upon this Saviour of the World. He only hides his Face for a Season, to make us more diligent and eager in the Search of him: He withdraws himself from our first Assaults, that we may renew the Attack with more Vigour, and loves to have

before the King and Queen. 69

have what he delights to give, seemingly S E R M.
forced out of his Hands. Let us then II.
beset him every where, attempt him in
Publick and in Private, in the Congre-
gation, in our Families, in our Closets,
in our Beds; for This is a holy Violence,
and ought to be committed; This is
the only Combat, for which no Time, no
Place can be unseasonable; and it is the
only one too, in which we are sure of
Victory at last, if we do but continue
Wrestling, and not let go our Hold.

AND Reason sure there is for all our
Vehemence, when the Success is of such
Consequence to us. For though Our
Children be not Lunatick, yet we need
a Cure no less miraculous, than this Wo-
man in the Text did; and that for a Re-
lation, which ought to be much more dear
and tender to us. For, alas! our Souls
are *grievously vexed with a Devil*, yea,
with a Legion of Devils; wild unruly
Passions, and exorbitant Lusts, which rend,
and tear, and torment us. This Posses-
sion is much too strong to recover our
selves from; nothing less than the Al-
mighty Word of Our only Saviour can

70 A SERMON preach'd, &c.

S E R M. release and restore us. To Him there-

II. fore we must come, " Even to Thee, O
" Blessed Jesus! O cast us not off ut-
" terly, but bring us back to our right
" Mind. We are not indeed worthy to
" be called thy *Children*, yet in Pity, O
" Gracious *Master*, disdain not to feed
" us with the *Crumbs that fall from thy*
" *Table*. We would only, that Thou
" vouchsafe to Heal and to Pardon;
" *Mercy, Mercy*, is our only Cry, *Have*
" *Mercy on us, thou Son of David*. Say
" but Thou to our distempered Souls,
" *Be it unto You even as You will*, and
" *we shall be made whole from this very*
" *Hour*. Amen."



SERMON



SERMON III.

Of Preparation for
DEATH *and* JUDGMENT.

PREACH'D at

WHITEHALL,

JANUARY 27. 169⁴₅.



MATT. XXIV. 44.

*Therefore be ye also ready; for in such
an Hour as ye think not, the Son of
Man cometh.*



FROM the Disciples shewing
our Lord the Buildings of
the Temple, He takes Oc-
casion, in the Beginning of
this Chapter, to foretel the lamentable

verse 1.

verse 2.

F 4

Exter-

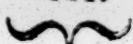
S E R M. Extermination of the Jewish People, and
 III. the utter Ruin of that Holy Place.

Ver. 3. &c.

Satisfying herein, so far as his Divine Wisdom thought fit, their Curiosity; who desired to know the precise Time of those dreadful Punishments, kept by God in reserve for the malicious Enemies of his Son, and the Truth. But, in regard there was, one Day, a more eminent Discrimination to be made, between them that believed in *Jesus*, and them that believed him not; a Distinction, not confined to one particular Place or People, but Universal, and such as none of the Sons of *Adam* can possibly be exempted from; a Process and Sentence of that infinite Consequence, that the Tribulation of the *Jews*, horrible as it was, should be but a faint and feeble Image of the Vengeance of the Lord, and the Terrors of the Wicked in That Day; our Saviour does therefore prudently improve this Opportunity, into a Discourse concerning That also. In which, he represents it, as a Thing of the highest and most general Concernment; the Last Great Revolution, which the Persons to whom he spoke, and
 all

Death and Judgment.

73

all Christians after them, were obliged SERMON.
daily and hourly to expect, and dili- III.
gently to prepare for. Upon which ac- 

count it is, that he expresses himself in such Terms, as might awaken their Souls, and quicken their Care; by shortning its Distance to the Eye, and declaring it, not only certain, but nigh at hand to every one of them. For thus (according to the known Usage of Prophetick Style, involving withal, and looking forward to the Antitype, when the Type is more directly mentioned,) I understand that Passage; *Verily I say unto you, This Generation shall not pass till all these Things be fulfilled; Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my Words shall not pass away.* Ver. 34. 35.

SEVERAL remarkable Dispensations of an avenging Providence had been exhibited to the preceding Ages of the World, which might and should have been abundant Intimations, that God will not verse 37.
fail to call Sinners to Judgment, and repay them to their Face. These ought to have made Men wary, and prevailed upon them to live, as becomes those, who know

S E R M.

III.

Ver. 38, 39.

know they must render an Account of their Actions. But, notwithstanding so many repeated Instances of a severe Reckoning, our Lord foresaw, that there would be vast Numbers still unmov'd, and unprepar'd; insomuch, that the Son of Man's Coming should not more resemble the Flood which drowned the Old World, in the Horror and Universal Extent of the Judgment, than it would in the Surprise and Indisposition of Men to meet him. Just such another sweeping Deluge shall This prove, as Swift, as Fatal, as Astonishing to all, who by timely Thought and due Vigilance are not ready for the sudden and amazing Separations it shall make: *Watch therefore, for ye know not what Hour your Lord doth come.* And farther yet; Because we ought to be much ashamed, that *the Children of this World should be so much wiser in their Generation than the Children of Light*; the Example of a careful Householder is propounded, as a fresh Incentive to our Diligence. For if He would most certainly have watch'd, could he but have learn'd at what Time the Thief would

Death and Judgment. 75

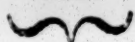
would come; how much more ought We ^{S E R M.}
to be upon Our Guard against the Son of ^{III.}
Man's Coming, which, for its Own Sud- ^{Ver. 43.}
denness, and Our Unpreparedness, is com-
pared to that of a Thief in the Night?
If He, I say, the Extremity of whose
Damage is supposed not to exceed the
Breaking up of his House, and the Loss
of such Goods, as Time and Providence
have a thousand Ways of restoring; how
much rather We, whose Treasure is
greater, and whose Danger is infinitely
greater, and whose Loss, if once sustain-
ed, is for ever irreparable? *Therefore be
ye also ready*, for, as at a Time when that
Householder is not aware, the Thief
rushes in upon Him: So *in such an Hour
as You think not, the Son of Man cometh.*

THIS I take to be the true Order and
Connexion of what our Lord hath deli-
ver'd upon this Matter, from *Verse 29.*
to that of my Text inclusively. Upon
which, that I may discourse in the most
clear and familiar, as well as what I con-
ceive the most profitable Manner, give
me leave to observe this following Me-
thod:

I. *First,*

SERM.

III.



- I. *First*, To propose some Observations leading to a right Apprehension of the Words themselves.
 - II. *Secondly*, COMING up to the Point in my Text, To say something of the Suddenness of the Son of Man's coming, and how that Quality belongs to it.
 - III. *Thirdly*, To lay down some Directions, how we may be ready to meet him, at that Coming of His.
 - IV. AFTER all which, if the Time will allow me to draw an Inference or two from the foregoing Heads, I shall fully satisfy my Intention in the Choice of this Subject.
- I. I BEGIN with some Observations relating to the Words themselves, and preliminary to the main Business and immediate Intent of them.
1. AND here, first of all, I cannot but take notice, That *the Son of Man's coming*,

Death and Judgment. 77

coming, whatever that Expression means, SERM.
is not at all attempted to be proved, but III.
declared only, and spoken of as a sufficiently known and uncontestable Truth. The Manner of it indeed, and his pompous Appearance, are largely described; The Suddenness of it, and the Improvidence of the World, are particularly foretold; Many importunate Exhortations to qualify and put our Souls in due Posture for it, very movingly insisted upon; and the End of this Coming, both in This and the following Chapter, manifestly declared to be, the taking an Account of his Servants, examining how Each of them had acquitted themselves in their respective Trusts and Capacities, and Awarding to Every one his Portion and Recompence accordingly. From all which it is exceeding plain, that the last General Judgment is meant by it, when *All Men shall give account for their own Works, and they that have done Good shall go into Life everlasting, and they that have done Evil into everlasting Fire.* But of the Judgment itself, there are no Pains taken to argue and evince, that such a Thing should

SERM.

III.

should be ; because this was already an establish'd notorious Principle : And none of those, with whom our Saviour now conversed, were so bold as to call it publickly into question, or so ignorant, as to admit any Doubt concerning it, in their own private Opinions and Consciences.

Mark xiii.
37.

2. BUT Secondly, Though by this *Coming of the Son of Man*, the General Judgment be principally intended ; yet to any who shall compare this Passage in *St. Matthew*, with its parallel in *St. Mark*, it will be very obvious, that This cannot be the Only Thing meant by it. Our Lord adds there, *What I say unto You, I say unto All* : Intimating hereby, that the Cautions he lays down, and the Reason of them, concern not some Few, of One Generation only, but were equally applicable to every succeeding Age of Christians to the World's End. It is also evident even to Sense, that the Day of Judgment, literally speaking, did not surprize those very Persons, to whom these Oracles were delivered : There having run out, since their Deaths, more than

than Sixteen hundred Years already ; and S E R M.
 at what Distance that Day may still be III.
 from us , none but God can tell. If For, 36.

then we can discover any Other Thing,
 which every Man is equally concerned
 to provide for, and which may very just-
 ly be termed the Coming of the Lord, there
 will be all the Reason in the World for ex-
 tending our Saviour's Discourse to That
 also. Now such in every Circumstance is
 the Day of our Death ; This being to every
 single Man in particular, what the last
 Judgment will be to the whole World
 in general. The Suddenness of its co-

ming may be the same ; the State of our
 Souls will be the same ; and consequent-
 ly the Danger of being unprovided must
 needs be the same. For these Two have
 a strict Connection, and absolute Depen-

dance upon one another. And, " For Epist. S. ad Helv. ch.
 " this Reason (says St. *Augustin*) he
 " speaks to All, Things, which in their
 " literal Sense belong to such only as
 " shall be found alive at his second Co-
 " ming, because they do really in this
 " Respect concern All, that the Last
 " Day shall find them in the very same
 " Con-

SERM.

III.

“ Condition, that the last Day of their
 “ Life left them in. Such as every one
 “ dies, such shall he come to Judgment.
 “ And hence it is his Duty to watch for
 “ the Lord’s Coming; because that Last
 “ Coming shall find him unprepared, if
 “ his Death found him so.” To the
 same Purpose St. *Jerom*, in his Com-
 ment on *Joel* ii. “ *By the Day of the*
 “ *Lord*, says he, understand the Day of
 “ Judgment, or the Day of every par-
 “ ticular Man’s Departure out of the
 “ Body. For what shall be done in the
 “ Day of Judgment to All, the same is
 “ fulfilled, as to each single Person, in
 “ the Day of his Death.” With these
 two Fathers agree the Generality of an-
 cient Interpreters, and upon the same
 Ground too. So little it seems were those
 good Men sensible of a middle State for
 the purging Mens Souls by Fire; or any
 other way of putting those into a Capa-
 city for Heaven afterwards, who were
 not so at their Entrance into the Cham-
 bers of the Dead.

3. THIRDLY, It is well worth a Re-
 mark, That although both these *Comings*
 of

Death and Judgment. 81

of the Son of Man be intended, yet That S E R M.
only of the Last Judgment is mentioned. III.

And a great deal of Reason there is, why it should be so: Because This being the Last solemn Appearance of Quick and Dead, attended with all the Terror and Pomp, which we find described in Scripture; would naturally (if any Thing would) work Mens Minds up to a becoming Sense, and mighty Apprehension of their Danger. Whereas Death is become so ordinary, that the very Commonness of it, (which ought in Reason to move us the more) hath render'd it familiar: And therefore This would have been mentioned, as it is seen and discoursed of every Day, without any great Matter of Efficacy or Impression. To which we must add too, that, were it not for that Great Audit before God's Tribunal, there can be no Account at all given, why we should be in any Degree solicitous to prepare for Death. For what is Death, considered in it self, but only a Dissolution of Soul and Body; a State of Darkness and Oblivion; a Fate common to all Things under the Sun? And so, not worth

G

the

S E R M.

III.

the least Part of our Care and Concern, any otherwise than as it consigns us over, and leads us directly to that General Hearing. But upon this Account, every body must confess, that we lie under the strictest Engagements to work, while this short *Day* of Life continues; because Our Sun draws towards setting, and the *Night comes on* apace *wherein no Man can work*: Or, in the Preacher's Language, *to do whatsoever we attempt with the utmost of our Might, because there is no Device nor Knowledge, no Repentance, no Reformation, no Improvement of our selves, in the Grave, whither we are all going.*

FROM these three Considerations thus premised, you easily discern the Substance of my Text to be this: “ That it is the
 “ Duty of every Christian, as he values
 “ his Safety and his Soul, to bear constantly in Mind, and make good Provision against, the Second Coming of
 “ the Lord; whether that be the Last
 “ Great Judgment; or, which in effect
 “ will be all one to Him, the Time of
 “ his own Death; since this is but a
 “ Preface

Death and Judgment. 83

“ Preface to that Judgment, and only S E R M.
“ reserves him bound up in Fetters of III.
“ Sleep and Earth, till the Almighty
“ Judge shall unlock our close dark Pri-
“ sons, and summon us all to our Trial.”

For the *Coming of the Son of Man* in both these Senses is sure, and therefore it concerns every one to be ready: Especially if we reflect again, that there is a Hazard, nay, a high Probability of his *coming in such an Hour as we think not*: Which leads me to the

II. SECOND Particular I promised to discourse of: The Suddenness of the Son of Man's Coming, and in what Sense that Quality belongs to it.

NOW an Accident is reputed Sudden, either with regard to the Time when it happens, or the Persons to whom it happens; Either when it comes immediately, and without any notice of it beforehand; Or when it overtakes Men unawares, at a Season in which they least think of it, and before they have competently arm'd themselves against it. In the former of

S E R M. these Respects, the *Son of Man's Coming*

III.

is not, cannot be sudden: For,



I. I F by that Coming we mean the General Judgment, Who can have the Confidence to pretend, that This is brought upon the World in a Trice, and without sufficient Notice? Did not the Prophet *Daniel*, above two thousand Years ago, declare to his People what God had shewed him in a Vision, when *his Throne was like a fiery Flame, and his Wheels like burning Fire; Thousand Thousands ministred unto him, and Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand stood before him; when the Judgment was set, and the Books were opened?* Did not the same Mouth proclaim aloud, *That they, who sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt?* So that, even before the Light of the Gospel shone forth, there were Intimations in abundance given, that the Almighty would arise to Judgment, and reward every Man according to his Work. But we have a much surer Word than that of Prophecy; The express Testimo-

Dan. vii.
9. 10.

Chap. xii
2.

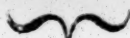
ny

Death and Judgment. 85

ny of our Blessed Lord, and his Holy S E R M.
 Apostles; That very Son, to whom the III.
Father hath committed all Judgment, John v. 22.
 tells us in the following Chapter, that 31, 32.
He will come in his Glory, and all the Chap. xxv.
Holy Angels with him; that he will sit
on his Throne, and all Nations shall be
gathered before him: And in this Chapter,
That he will send his Angels with a Verse 31.
great Sound of a Trumpet, and they shall
gather together his Elect from the four
Winds, from one End of Heaven to the
other. St. Paul accordingly hath fore-
 warned the *Corinthians*, and in Them all
 to whom that Epistle should come, *That* 2 Cor. v.
we must all appear before the Judgment 10.
Seat of Christ, that every one may re-
ceive the Things done in his Body, ac-
cording to that he hath done, whether it
be good or bad. He hath likewise pressed
 the *Athenians* to speedy Conversion and
 Repentance, from this most unanswerable
 Argument, that *God hath appointed a* Acts xvii.
Day, in which he will judge the World 31.
in Righteousness, by that Man whom he
hath ordained, whereof he hath given
Assurance unto all Men, in that he hath

SERM.

III.



2 Pet. iii.
3, 4.

Ver. 8, 9,
10.

raised him from the Dead. St. Peter acquaints us yet farther, That the Delay of this Judgment had tempted some ungodly and inconsiderate Wretches, to question, whether there would ever be any such Thing. But, while those Scoffers ridiculed Religion, and rallied this uneasy Doctrine, with that impious Taunt, Where, where is the Promise if his Coming? He teaches us to entertain quite different Notions of the Matter. Beloved, says he, be not ignorant of this one Thing, that one Day is with the Lord as a thousand Years, and a thousand Years as one Day. The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise, as some Men count Slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should Perish, but that all should come to Repentance. But the Day of the Lord will come as a Thief in the Night. To all which, and many other express Testimonies of Scripture, if we add the constant Dictates and private Impulses, the Applauses and the Reproaches of Conscience; which, according to the Quality of each moral Action, never fail to strike

Death and Judgment. 87

as with some Expectations of a distant S E R M.
 Reward or Punishment: If we reflect III.
 upon the Reasonableness, the Necessity
 of such a Thing, in order to a publick
 Vindication of the Divine Justice, and
 a perfect Clearing of the dark and myste-
 rious Methods of Providence, which with
 such seeming Indifference distributes the
 Good and Evil Things of this present
 Life: These will appear so many evi-
 dent invincible Proofs of a future Judg-
 ment; and we cannot with any Forehead
 pretend, that Almighty G O D hath been
 wanting, either to inform us that it shall
 be, or to warn and fortify us against it.

2. B U T, Secondly, If by the *Son of
 Man's coming*, be understood our own
 Death; alas! where do we not meet with
 fresh Remembrancers of that? Besides,
 that Almighty G O D hath ordained this
 Coming, as a necessary Introduction to
 the Other, for *It is appointed unto Men* Heb. ix.
 27.
once to die, and after that, the Judg-
ment: Besides this, I say, Every Thing
 we see, or hear, or know, turns our Mo-
 nitor, and we must be blind and deaf
 not to be sensible, and perfectly stupid,

S E R M.

III.

not to apprehend and consider it. Every dying Year, every declining Day, every drooping Flower and falling Leaf, are but so many Emblems of our certain Mortality. And, for fear we should neglect these, as Instances too remote, and too little concerning us; the continual Change of our own Bodies brings the Matter home, and makes the unwelcome Application for us. For, in despite of all the vain Flatteries, and perverse Reasonings of Flesh and Blood to the contrary; the unsteady Condition of Human Nature is a most sensible, an ever-present Argument, that as *Man comes up like a Flower*, so there is no Remedy, but one way or other he must be *cut down like it* too. If he escape the rude Assaults of sad untimely Accidents; if neither Violence crop him off, nor Sickness blast him in the Bud; yet the Slower Decays of Age will be sure to wither his Beauty, and make his Strength bend and stoop, till he be forced down into his native Earth again. And yet in all this Comparison there is, as *Job* well observes, one mighty Disproportion; That
of

Death and Judgment. 89

of a *Plant or an Herb* there is hope, that S E R M.
it will sprout again; The Return of the III.
 Year and a kindly Season may cherish it, Ver. 7,
 or the Care of the Cultivator and Refresh- 8,
 ing Moisture *may make it bud*, and hin- 9,
 der the tender Branch from ceasing; But 10.
 Man *dieth and wasteth away, he lieth* Ver. 11, 12.
down, and riseth not, till the Heavens
be no more.

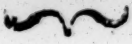
OR, if the Examples of other Crea-
 tures be not drawn into Consequence,
 nor the gradual Decays of our own Per-
 sons duly attended to; yet even where these
 have not accomplished their full work,
 how prodigiously impenetrable must we
 be, not to take the Impression? The same
 common Nature is imparted to All Men,
 and All are liable to the same Dangers
 and Infirmities. Our own late sad Ex-
 perience hath convinced us, that neither
 Youth nor Vigour, neither Piety nor Pow-
 er, is Defence sufficient against this Fatal
 Blow. If any Human Excellence could
 get above it; if the most Zealous Prayers,
 and United Wishes of Good People,
 could suspend it; that Royal Pattern of
 Virtue, whose Life was worth Ten
 Thousand

SERM.

III.

Thousand of Ours, had not so soon left us this most afflicting Instance, That not Any, not even the Greatest, not even the Best, can have any Pretence to think themselves exempted from a Destiny, which is inflicted without Distinction, upon Persons of all Ages, all Conditions, and all Constitutions. And of This indeed we have Experiments without Number, the fullest Evidence that can possibly be given. For the last Groans and Agonies of departing Souls, the sad Solemnities of Funerals, the dejected Looks and mourning Weeds of Melancholy surviving Friends, and the still more melting Sighs and Tears of the poor Widows and Fatherless, bereaved of their best Comfort and Support ; These are Objects in every Time, and every Place, that do so constantly present themselves to our View, that a Man must even go out of the World not to meet with them. How then shall we call that Coming of our Lord *Sudden* for want of sufficient Notice ; which we are so many several ways, and so continually reminded of, that without doing the extremest Violence to our Reason,

Death and Judgment. 91

Reason, and our Senſes, it is impoſſible S E R M.
for us not to expect and daily apprehend III.
it? 

BUT I obſerved before, that an Accident is ſometimes reputed *Sudden*, as well in regard of the Perſon to whom it happens, as of the Time when it happens. And certainly, that Obſervation never met with ſo many Experimental Proofs in any one Inſtance, as it does in the Caſe before us. For it would really amaze any thinking Man, to reflect, how the Generality of the World behave themſelves upon this Occaſion; and how very ſmall a Part of their Care they make it, to provide for the Coming of their Lord, in Either of the forementioned Reſpects. They commonly profeſs to believe a Future Judgment with the higheſt Degree of Assurance that is poſſible; They make frequent and pathetical Harangues upon the Certainty of Death, and the Shortneſs of the Time permitted us here upon Earth; They pretend too to be ſenſible, that upon this fleeting Moment depends an Eternity of Blis or Woe; That their Immortal Souls, and all that
can

SERM.

III.

can be called Precious, lie at stake; and must be dealt with hereafter, as this little Span of Life is improved now: But still, as if they had made a Covenant with Death, and were in League with Hell, their Conversations argue a quite contrary Persuasion; their Affections and Desires fix and terminate here below; and, by a strange Sort of unthinking Perverseness, the perishing Trifles of this World wholly possess and employ them; while the main End and Business of their Creation, the Concerns of a Future and Better State, (which are in truth the only Things worth a Man's Consideration and Pains,) are scarce allowed any Place at all in their Thoughts and Memories.

How Prodigious, and withal how Dangerous a Folly this wretched Negligence is, you need not be told any more, after what hath been already delivered in the Beginning of this Discourse. And therefore, without farther Enlargement to represent it here, I shall descend to my

III. THIRD Particular, Wherein I proposed to lay down some Directions,
how

Death and Judgment. 93

how we may escape the Condemnation of such careless Men, and what Course we must take, to be found ready to meet our Lord at his Coming.

AND here I shall insist upon such Rules only, as I find given by our Blessed Saviour himself upon this very Occasion. Now they are especially Four ; Two of which are Negative, and regard some Vices, which must be declined ; The other Two are Positive, and prescribe some Duties to be observed. The Vices to be avoided, are *Sensuality*, and *Love of the World* ; and against these our Lord gives this Caution : *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your Hearts be over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and Cares of this Life, and so that Day come upon you unawares.* In which Words, the Advice is given in such a Manner, as at the same Time to discover the Ground upon which it proceeds ; and wherein the Danger of being addicted to such a Course of Life consists. For by this means, it seems, Men are exposed to Surprise, and apt to have their *Hearts over-charged*. My present Intent
from

SER. III.
III.

Luke xxi.

34.

SER M. from hence is to shew, that This is the
 III. Natural and Unavoidable Consequence
 of those Vices, and so they cannot
 but be most pernicious Hindrances to a
 Christian's Preparation for Death and
 Judgment.

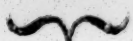
I. THE Former of these is Sensuality,
 which our Lord hath expressed by *Sur-
 feiting and Drunkenness*; Intending I
 suppose hereby, not only those two Sins,
 barely considered in themselves; but all
 the cursed Effects of Gluttony and In-
 temperance, and the many vile Lusts
 and Mischiefs, which are wont to follow
 thereupon. For the Indulging an Habi-
 tual Practice of these Vices, discomposes
 the Inward, no less evidently, than it
 distempers and destroys the Outward
 Man. For as Here they pall the Appe-
 tite, vitiate the Palate, clog and dull
 the Animal Spirit, and, in one word,
 render the Body a Sink of Diseases and
 Ill Humours; the very same Effects in
 Proportion have they upon the Mind
 too. From hence Mens Love of God,
 and Esteem for Goodness grow faint and
 cold; Their Inclinations and Desires are
 per.

Death and Judgment: 95

perfectly changed, and corrupted; They lose all Relish of true and manly Satisfaction, and can no longer taste any Thing that is Rational, and Heavenly, and Pure. Thus, while they are gorged with carnal Delights, they become listless, and heavy, and unactive; degenerate into Flesh and Sense; grow more and more unfit for any Attempt becoming Men and Christians; and at last lie utterly sunk and buried in Spiritual Stupidity and Sloth. Now all this proceeds, partly from the Intimate Union between the Soul and Body, and partly from the Opposition between these Two in the Business of Religion. Hence it comes to pass, that, as oft as we pamper the Flesh, we do at the same time not only load our Better and more refined Part, but we cherish a deadly Foe too. Whereas on the Contrary, a Religious Sobriety keeps Men awake and active; gives them Leisure to cool and be serious; admits so necessary Thoughts as Death and Judgment; and suggests, that upon Them depends the Bliss, which Immortal Spirits were design'd to attain. A Sensual Man hath only his Intervals, and short

SER. VI.

III.



S E R M. short Snatches of Thinking, and even in
 III. Them, a Byas upon his Judgment; and incredibly hard it is to raise him up to any tolerable Estimate of Heaven and Intellectual Joys. But Mortification and Temperance leave us free and unprejudiced, give us a right Turn of Soul, and Reason room to exert itself; They inspire a generous Disdain of all Earthly Enjoyments, and dispose us to thirst after another World, rather than to take up with the Treacherous Soothings of This. For, by removing our false Opticks, and shewing every Thing to the naked Eye, they soon convince us, how very little the Gayest Man here can arrive at; the bitter Conclusion Sinful Pleasures are sure to find; and the many Dreadful Snares and Inconveniencies, which Ease and Luxury betray Men to.

Luke xxi.
 34.

2. THE Second Thing our Blessed Saviour advises his Disciples against, is the Love of the World. *Take heed* (says he) *that ye be not over-charged with the Cares of this Life.* Where, by forbidding to engage too deeply in such Cares, you may be very confident, it is

Death and Judgment.

97

no part of his Meaning, that we should so SERM.
III.
entirely lay our selves out upon the Next
Life, as to look after no Provision for a
Convenient Subsistence in This: But, as
in *Matt. vi.* he blames such Degrees of
Anxiety, as argue unworthy Distrusts of
Providence, and ill suit a Christian's
Faith; so here he condemns that criminal
Excess of Care, which disorders Men in
their Duty, and takes their Minds off
from their own Mortality, and the Re-
gard for another World. Every one's
own Experience would quickly teach
him, if our Saviour had not done it to
his hand, what inconsistent Things the
Service of God and Mammon are; and
how impossible it is, at one and the same
Time, to be extreamly solicitous for this
World's Goods, and to *seek the Kingdom
of God, and his Righteousness*, with any
becoming Degree of Affection and Zeal.
The Matter indeed is so ordered, that
these Cares, in any Condition, are the most
dangerous Snares a Man can fall into.
If he be poor, and struggling hard for a
Competency; Then they perplex and
distract him, they fill him with a thousand
H mean

SER M. mean Despondencies, and expose him to
 III. all the little Shifts and base Arts of unjust Gain. If he be wealthy, and a Desire of increasing Riches occasion it; nothing can be more directly opposite to the Duty of Preparation in my Text: For Abundance and Success commonly inflame those Desires, and render the Mind but more Sordid and Abject; They fasten the Soul down to the Vanities of This World, and will not suffer it to soar up to Another. But above all, they render the Thoughts of Death, and of leaving those belov'd Treasures, a most tormenting Consideration. So that every Way this immoderate Solitude is irreconcilable with a Christian's making ready to meet his Lord. For the Indigent Man, who is overcharged with it, gives himself no Leisure to provide for his Coming; and the Rich Man cannot endure to think of it. No wonder then if Men thus clogg'd and incumber'd do not escape that *Snare*, which the Gospel says that Day shall prove to *all them that dwell*, but especially to Them that so dwell, as to set up their Rest, *on the Earth*.

Luke xxi.
 35.

To

Death and Judgment. 99

TO the Two fore-mentioned Evils our Lord opposes as many Positive Virtues, which may assist and further us in our Provision for his Approach.

S E R M.
III.
~~~~~

THE Former of these is Watchfulness. By which we are to understand in general, Frequent Meditations upon, and a continual Regard to, that most Important Day : A having, as the Scripture calls it, *our Loins Girt, and our Lights burning*; A discharging our selves from the burdensome Concerns of Life, and making all here sit easy and loose about us ; and A Weaning our Affections from all such Pleasures, as might detain and divert us in our Christian Course. And as Light is sometimes, with a peculiar Energy, called *Shining*, thus it denotes an exemplary Piety, a graceful Behaviour, and extraordinary Diligence in our Calling ; A Conscientious maintaining the Post we are appointed to, and answering all that can be expected from us, in our respective Stations and Capacities. Thus our Lord explains himself in the Verses next after my Text, and that one Instance is applicable to

Luke xii  
35.

Matt 7  
16

H 2

infi-

SER M. infinite others, *Who is a Faithful and*

III. *Wise Servant, whom his Lord hath*  
 ver. 45, 46, *made Ruler over his Household, to give*  
*them Meat in due Season? Blessed is*  
*that Servant, whom his Lord, when he*  
*cometh, shall find so doing.*

2. ONCE more. In regard our Task is difficult, and our Avocations many; our Enemies Strong, and We of our selves but Weak, but very Weak; we are farther advised and commanded, to be frequent and diligent, in calling in Succours from abroad, and applying our selves for Strength and Help to Him, who alone can, and who will not fail in his due Time to deliver us. *Take ye heed,* (says Mark xiii. 33. *Christ,) watch and pray, for ye know not when the Time is.* And in another Place, *Watch ye therefore, and pray* Luke xxi. 36. *always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those Things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.* Our own Endeavours will do something; and certain it is, that most Men might do a great deal more, than either they do, or think they can do, would

# Death and Judgment. 101

would they but set about their Business S E R M.  
heartily, and in good Earnest. III.

— Δυναμὸς καὶ ἀνάμνησις ἐγγυδὶ τοῖς αἰσιν.

But still, nothing can be a more fatal Injury to us, than the relying upon our own Strength and Diligence; supposing This to be never so Faithful, That to be never so Great. For the very Best of us all, ( God help us ) does not so far conquer the Infirmities of Human Nature, as to be always upon his Guard; but will frequently find himself surpris'd, and hath therefore abundant occasion to pray, both that he may be forgiven his former Inadvertencies, and enabled to stand faster for the Time to come. Especially to intreat and implore, with all the Earnestness and Holy Passion imaginable, that *In the Hour of Death, and in the Day of Judgment, the Good Lord would deliver him.* That the Last mighty Change, upon which the whole of his future Fate must depend, may not find him Idle or Unprovided; but Awake and Busy, Discharged of every Weight, and his

H 3

Lamp



SER M. *Lamp lighted and trimm'd*; that when  
 III. the *Bridegroom* appears, he may have  
 nothing to do, but to obey his Call, and  
*Go in with him to the Marriage.*

I PROCEED now, in the *last* Place, to draw some few Inferences from what has been said, and so conclude.

I. AND *First* of all. We have here a very fair Occasion given us, of contemplating the Exceeding Wisdom and Justice of our Universal Judge. His Wisdom is eminently seen, in taking such a Course to inform Men of this Second Coming, as is, of all others, the most proper and likely to put them upon Preparing for it; and This vindicates his Justice, when he Punishes all those, who do not prepare for it accordingly. That he will most assuredly come, as that respects both our own Death and the Last General Doom, we have all the Certainty imaginable: But as to the punctual precise Time of Either of these Comings, he hath left us as utterly uncertain. Now this very Manner of Dealing is the Strongest Argument in the World, for Care and  
 Cir-

## Death *and* Judgment. 103

Circumspection. For, had that Critical S E R M .  
Minute been revealed to every particular III.  
Man; this had been the Way to encourage  
Licentiousness and Security. The Cor-  
rupt Inclinations of Flesh and Blood  
might have taken mighty Advantage from  
hence, to persuade Men, that some little  
of the last Remains of Life, the Dregs  
of a Feeble old Age, would abundantly  
suffice to be dedicated to God; and that a  
small Matter would set all aright between  
Them and so Gracious, so Forgiving a Mas-  
ter; That it were too much in all Reason  
to put themselves under Restraints, and be  
perplexed for a Thing a great Way off;  
and therefore they might safely indulge,  
and live at large, the Beginning of their  
Days at least; and thus Many would have  
laid hold on but too fair a Pretence, for  
a late Reformation and Death-bed Repen-  
tance. We see daily, how apt Men are to  
run these Risques, as the Case stands now;  
and may reasonably presume, they would  
have been much more bold in venturing  
their Souls, had it been otherwise. But  
as it is, there can be no colourable Excuse  
for such a wicked Negligence. For the

S E R M.

III.

particular Instant of a Thing's happening, is but an Accidental and Extrinfecal Circumstance, and does not in the least take off from the Reality and Certainty of the Thing. The Promises and Predictions of God are unchangeable in this Point; Where Eternal Truth stands engaged, the Thing subsists, in His Decree, already; and what he hath so said shall be brought to pass, we ought to esteem as Certain, ( and in truth it is as certain every whit ) as if our own Eyes beheld it now, performed in every Circumstance. Come he will, That's beyond all Question. But whether in *the first*, or *the second*, or *the third*, or *the fourth Watch*, we cannot tell; And for this Reason we ought to be extreamly circumspect, and to watch always. Death and Judgment may overtake our Infancy; or they may snatch us away in the Heat and Bloom of Youth; or they may crush our riper and more confirmed Years; so that Health and Vigour will justify no Man's being unprovided; But if they should delay till *the fourth Watch*, till Old Age, and Grey Hairs shed themselves upon our Heads,

Mark xiii.

35



# Death and Judgment. 105

Heads, yet still this Forbearance does SERM. III.  
 not prove, either that they might not  
 have broke in upon us sooner, or that they  
 will never do it at all. Against the for-  
 mer our Saviour uses this very Motive to  
 Caution in my Text; and to the latter I  
 may very properly apply that Passage of  
 the Prophet *Habakkuk* concerning his  
 Vision, *It is* (says he) *for an Appoint-* Habak. iii.  
*ed Time; at the End it shall speak and*<sup>3.</sup>  
*not lye; though it tarry, yet wait for it;*  
*because it will surely come, it will not*  
*tarry.*

2. SECONDLY, What has been said  
 upon this Subject, may serve for a very  
 just Reproof to the Unreasonableness and  
 Vanity of such Men, as are eternally be-  
 wailing the Shortness of Life, and utter-  
 ing such Complaints, as seem to insinua-  
 te, that God deals hardly with Mankind,  
 in allowing them no longer a Space  
 for working out their Salvation. *My*  
*Brethren, let no Man deceive you with*  
*vain Words,* Almighty God is a Fair and  
 Bountiful Master. He affords every one  
 abundant Opportunities for the Work ap-  
 pointed him to do. Were They only  
 to

SERM. to be accounted Long-liv'd, who have  
 III. finished the Task and Business of Life,  
 then (God knows) the Generality of  
 People live but a very little while. But  
 the Question in this Case must not be,  
 whether such Men have actually wrought  
 out their Salvation; but whether or no,  
 supposing them to make the best Use of  
 their Time, they might not have done it,  
 if they would. And the true Christian  
 Way of Computation is to measure Life,  
 by the Improvements made of it, rather  
 than by a Term or Number of Years, be  
 they never so many. He that dies Old  
 in Virtue, can never be so Young, as to die  
 untimely; and he that is a Stranger to This,  
 tho' he should equal the Years of *Methu-  
 selah*, yet, as to all the true Purposes of  
 Living, is an Infant still. In a word, If  
 Men will trifle away their precious Hours,  
 when they are perpetually told how much  
 depends upon them, the Fault is their  
 own, and who can help it? The shortest  
 Life is sufficient to bring a Diligent  
 and Careful Man to Heaven, and there-  
 fore the shortest Life is long enough.  
 For Ten thousand Ages can do no more;  
 and

## Death and Judgment. 107

and to the Idle, the Sensual, and Secure, even those Ten thousand Ages would be as much too short, as the Space now afforded them.

S E R M.

III.

3. THIRDLY, and Lastly, From what went before, it does likewise appear, with what Prudence and Piety our Holy Mother, the Church of *England* teaches, all her Children to deprecate the Misery and Judgment of a *Sudden Death*. Sudden I mean, in respect of its self; when it is not usher'd in, by any preceding Sickness, or such visible Sinkings of Nature, as God is commonly pleas'd to send before, for the more awakening Significations of his last Great Call. 'Tis true, indeed, not *knowing what Hour the Lord doth come*, we should expect him every Hour; and the Suddenest Death will be no Excuse to them who do not so; but yet we have a great deal of Reason to wish and to pray, that so important a Change may approach with something of Warning and Solemnity. The best of us all, after his nicest Preparation, will find Employment enough for his last Hours; and I am apt to believe, it is very difficult, even for Good Men, in Health and Vigour,



SERM.

III.

Vigour, to bring themselves into so serious a Frame of Mind, with regard to the next World, as They may, who see and feel themselves just upon the Brink of it. A new Scene of Things and Thoughts then opens; such as kindles a Zeal sometimes where it was not before; and makes it burn brighter, where it was. And oft we see such glad Foretastes of Bliss, as abundantly compensate the bodily Pains, and make all a Good Man's *Bed in his Sicknefs*. Besides all This, to be assisted with the Advice of our Spiritual Guides, to be strengthened with the *Viaticum* of the Church, the Sacrament and Seal of our Redemption, to be recommended by the Intercessions of our parting Friends; These are mighty Comforts and Advantages. So that a lingering Disease, which usually passes for a great Affliction, is in this respect a great Blessing; for while Death makes regular and leisurely Advances, he deals with us like a Fair Enemy, calls aloud to the Field, and bids us make ready for the Combat. But to be hurried away to Eternity in a Trice;

# Death and Judgment. 109

Trice ; To have Body and Soul torn S E R M.  
 afunder at one Stroke, without one poor III.  
 Minute or two allow'd to take leave ;  
 without one, *Lord, have Mercy upon me,*  
 at the last Gasps ! Jesus defend us ! Sure  
 this cannot but seem a dreadful Thing  
 to every confidering Christian. We will  
 wish then, and we will pray earnestly,  
 that God would not deal so with Us ;  
 But, since it is possible, that he may use  
 This, as well as any other Method of  
 calling us to himself ; it will be as much  
 as Heaven and our Souls are worth, to  
 take care that the suddenest *Death* may  
 not be sudden in respect of Us ; but that we  
 be always *watchful*, and upon our Guard,  
 Provided and Ready, and therefore espe-  
 cially so, because, as my Text tells us,  
*In such an Hour as we think not, the Son*  
*of Man cometh.*

AND now, were it necessary (as I  
 hope, after what has been said, it is not,)  
 to urge this Duty yet farther upon you,  
 I promise my self, that could not be done  
 more successfully, than by proposing to  
 Your Imitation that Royal Example,  
 which ought, and certainly will not cease,  
 to

SERM. to live in our Remembrance and Admiration, as long as Time and Memory themselves shall last. But the Endeavouring to represent This is attended with many *Difficulties*. For Bright Patterns in Christianity, and Master-pieces in Nature, are what a Man may shew respectful Intentions in Drawing, but there are few hands so Masterly, that their Art and Colours can ever come up to the Life. Besides, Your own Recollection can give you more lively Images of this kind, than all the Words in the World are able to express; and *Happy sure were You*, her Servants, *who stood continually before Her*, and saw and heard her *Wisdom* and Goodness. Happy indeed, if you so saw, and so recollect, as in your own Lives to express those Graces, which render'd Her the Glory and Ornament of Her Age and Sex; the most conspicuous, not of Queens only, but of Wives and Women; and to every Humble, and Charitable, and Devout Christian, a Pattern of Prudence, and Piety, and Condescension; of all that Sweetness and Good Nature, which Religion, and nothing

1 King. x.  
8.



## Death and Judgment:

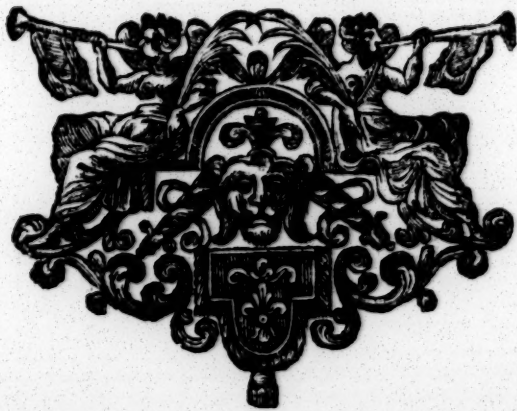
III

thing but Religion, can inspire Men with. S E R M.

III.

But the Enlarging upon This Subject, in This Place, and This Presence, would be apt to provoke a Passion, which, though it might sit well upon Friends and Attendants; yet ill agrees with the Reflections of a Christian, upon so Pious, so Majestick a Death. All therefore that I shall add is only This: That the Last Act of our Lives will depend upon those that go before; and the only Way to Die as your Admirable Mistress did, is to Live as She did. When we can with Her declare, that our Provisions for Eternity are not to make at our Last Hours; Then, and not till Then, may we hope to attain to some competent Degree of Her Magnanimity, and Noble Resignation. Surprise is the most dangerous Distress, that can possibly befall us in that great Conflict; and They, who have fenced themselves well against This, may with an Easiness and Composure, like Hers, look the King of Terrors in the Face, and Triumph even in Death. And, May the Illustrious Virtues of our Sovereign excite this commendable Emulation in

SERM. us all, That so, in God's due Time, we  
III. may not only attend and rejoice about  
Her Heavenly, as we did here about Her  
Earthly Throne, but (which could not  
be done here) that we may partake of,  
and share That Crown with Her for Ever!  
Which HE of his Infinite Mercy grant  
for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*





# SERMON IV.

THE

PERFECTION of Scripture

STATED,

And its

SUFFICIENCY Argued :

PREACH'D at the

*Publick Commencement at Cambridge,*

SUNDAY July 4. 1697.



2 TIM. iii. 16, 17.

*All Scripture is given by Inspiration of  
God, and is profitable for Doctrine,  
for Reproof, for Correction, for In-  
struction in Righteousness :*

*That the Man of God may be perfect,  
thoroughly furnished unto all good Works.*



THE Apostle, having had oc-  
casion, in the *fifteenth* Verse  
to mention the Holy Scrip-  
tures, under that general  
Character, of being *able to make Timothy*  
I *wise*



SER. M. *wife unto Salvation*, thought fit to enlarge somewhat more upon so Glorious a Subject, and to give this particular and very magnificent Commendation of them, which is contained in the Words now read to you.

IV.

For the better Understanding whereof, and setting the Argument comprehended under them in its true Light, permit me briefly to premise a few Observations, with regard to the Expressions themselves.

I. THE *First* of these relates to the Subject-Matter of the Assertion, *All Scripture*. Where, I need not tell you, That St. Paul by *Scripture* meant those Writings, which were generally received and revered in the Church of God, as authentick Significations of His good Pleasure. Such were the Books of the Old Testament, acknowledged to come from Heaven by the Mouth and Ministry of the Prophets; and These seem to have been the Scriptures, which *Timothy* is said to have known from a Child. And such likewise were those of the New Testament

Ver. 15.

ment then extant, which (if we attend SERM.  
IV. to the \* Time of sending this Epistle ) Many, indeed Most, except the Writings of St. *John*, seem to have been.

AND therefore † Learned Persons have taken These into the Account, and thought St. *Paul* very properly to intimate, that They also were equally worthy of *Timothy's* Study ; of the same mighty Benefit and Use ; and such as carried the same Stamp of a Divine Authority with those of the Old Testament, to which Men paid so profound and entire Respect.

BUT then ‡ *All Scripture* is to be understood, ( as the School speaks ) not  
in

\* Ann. Chr. LXVII. Neron. XIII. vide Pearson. Cestr. in Annal. Paulin.

† So Scultetus in locum : Chemnitius Exam. Conc. Trident. P. I. cap. 1. Gerhard Loc. Commun. de Sacr. Script. cap. 18. p. 147.

‡ Nomen Græcum *πᾶς*, interdum Universalitatem significat, interdum Integritatem — Ita hic *πᾶσα γραφή* idem est quod *ὅλη γραφή*, adeoque rectè vertitur, *Tota Scriptura* Scultet.

Qui nostram Interpretationem respuunt, obtendunt non dici *πᾶσα ἡ γραφή* sed *πᾶσα γραφή*. Sed nec, si sequaris Interpretationem nostram, opus erit Articulo. Vox enim *γραφῆ* nonnunquam etiam sine Articulo, sine Adjectivo sumitur Antonomastice, ut *Rom. i. 2. 2 Pet. i. 20. Jac. Cappell.*

S E R M. in a Distributive, but a Collective Sense;  
IV. *that is,* We must interpret it of the whole Body of Scripture taken together and in the Gross, and not of each particular Passage to be met with there. The first Clause of the Text indeed is true, even in this more rigid Construction; and an equal Necessity of the Writers being led into all Truth, and secured from all Error, seems to lie upon every Part of a Book, intended for the Guide of Souls. But most assuredly it is neither True, nor Necessary, nor so much as Possible, that each particular Passage should be of that general Profit and Perfection, and serve the several Purposes specified in my Text. And this I take to be so plain and obvious, that nothing could excuse the Mention of it, had not some Writers of great and very boasted Name,



Name, been content to stoop to so poor a Shift, as That of alledging against the Protestant Opinion concerning the Perfection of Scripture, That this Text to *Timothy*, either proves nothing at all in favour of it, or that it proves a great deal too much; as making every Book, and every Period, a perfect Rule of Faith and Life; by saying, That *All Scripture* is thus inspired, and thus exceeding profitable.

S E R M.  
VI.  
~~~~~

To these Scriptures thus considered, our Apostle gives *Two* Noble Commendations; *First*, That of their Divine Original, *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God*. *Secondly*, That of their general Usefulness. And this again is farther illustrated, by instancing, *First*, in the several Particulars, to which that Usefulness extends, *The Scripture is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness*: *Secondly*, By declaring the Degree of this Usefulness, and the Efficacy of the Scripture in those Respects; for that, by their Means the *Man of God* is capable

S E R M. pable of becoming *perfect*, and *thoroughly*
 IV. *furnished unto all good Works.*

By the *Man of God*, the Matter is not great, whether we understand, (with * some Interpreters) Every good Christian, whose Heart and Life is devoted to the Service and Obedience of God ; Or whether (with † Others,) the Bishops and Pastors of the Church ; such as *Timothy* himself was, and who, being dedicated and retaining to God in a more peculiar Manner, have a Title to this Character, distinct from the rest of Mankind. For in both Senses the Argument comes all to One. Since what the Pastors are bound to teach, the same their Flocks are bound to know, and believe, and do : So that this is but One Thing, considered under different Respects. And therefore what is sufficient or defective for a Rule, to Men in One of these Capacities, must consequently be in proportion so, to Men in the Other.

ONCE

* Cajetan. Chemnitius. Hemingius. Vatablus. Castalio.

† Scultetus Grotius Gerhard, &c.

ONCE more : That the Scripture is SERM.
IV.
a sufficient Supply for all the Necessities of this kind, the Apostle declares, by saying, *That the Man of God may be perfected by it, and thoroughly furnished to every good Work.* For That cannot be *perfect*, which wants any of its substantial Parts; nor is He *thoroughly furnished*, who lies still under a Necessity of seeking Supplies elsewhere.

THE Text, in all this Latitude, ministers much more Matter of Discourse, than either the Time, or Your Patience, can allow to be handled distinctly. And therefore, omitting wholly that first Part, which concerns the Divine Original of Scripture; as less suitable, and I hope the less needful, for this Mixt Audience; I beg Leave to confine my self to the Latter, which the Church of *England*, our Wife and Holy Mother, hath thus express'd in her Sixth Article of Religion : *The Holy Scripture containeth all Things necessary to Salvation ; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any Man, that it should be believed as*

SERM. *an Article of Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation.*

IV.

If this be once acknowledged for Truth; I do not see how any Man so persuaded, can deny the Scripture's Ability of *making us Wise unto Salvation*, and being a Compleat Guide in Points of Faith and Manners. And Such I shall endeavour to prove it, by shewing,

I. *First*, WHAT Manner of Perfection that is, which Men ought to attribute to Scripture, and are warranted to expect from it.

II. *Secondly*, WHAT general Arguments we have to ground this Opinion upon; and,

III. *Thirdly*, How the Scripture answers this Character, in those particular Instances, mention'd by my Text.

I. *First*, I am to consider, What Manner or Sort of Perfection that is, which we are allowed to attribute to, and to expect

expect from the Scripture. And This SERM.
deserves to be the more heedfully attended IV.
to; because the Liberty Some have taken
of imposing other Guides and Rules, be-
sides the Scripture, and the imprudent
Zeal of Others, who profess to follow
this in every Thing, and hang upon the
Word and Letter of Scripture, have
given Birth to many extravagant Opini-
ons, and greatly disturb'd Christianity
and good Order.

Now Scripture, being in the Nature
of a Medium, or Instrument, directed to
a certain End; the best and most regular
Way of coming to a right Understanding
in this Matter, will be, to take a short
View of the Design of Scripture, and
what Degree of Perfection is necessary to
answer that Design. Or, (to keep close
to St. Paul's Expression,) To examine *verse 15.*
what is meant by *Salvation*, and what is
requisite to qualify us for, and make us
Wise unto, Salvation.

1. Now, Salvation is but another
Word for that Eternal Happiness, which
God hath appointed to be the Ultimate
and Chief Good of Human Nature. This
Hap-

SERM.

IV.

Happiness is proposed, not as our Fate, but as our Reward; and, since every Reward supposes some Works, in Consideration whereof the Recompence is bestowed, it implies, that Men must contribute something to their own Happiness, and cannot reasonably hope to obtain it, without attending to those Conditions, upon the Performance of which the Reward is suspended. It implies farther, that the Notices of these Conditions, and the Right of appointing them, must come from, and are Originally lodged in Him, who proposes and promises that Recompence. And, if our Expectations and Desires of this Happy State be Natural and Universal, it will follow from hence too, that Nature furnishes Mankind with some sort of Means and Abilities, as well as Inclinations, to aspire after it: For the Wisdom and Goodness of the Creator is most eminently seen in This; that He deludes none of his Creatures with vain Expectations; nor infuses any such Desires into them, as must of Necessity be disappointed. These Abilities I take to have been given, in those

those general Notions of Good and Evil, S E R M.
 impress'd upon the Mind of Man, at his IV.
 First Creation. With regard to which

St. *Paul* mentions a Law, written in the Rom. ii.
 Hearts of Those, to whom the written 13, 14, 15.
 Law was not imparted. He observes
 the same pleasing Transports, the same
 melancholy Misgivings, to rise in their
 Breasts, according as Their Consciences
 accuse, or excuse them: He declares,
 that, in the Last Great Day of Account,
 They shall be judged upon this Issue.
 Since then there was a Time, when Man
 enjoyed no written Word at all; since,
 after some Parts of the World were blest
 with such Revelation, yet Others re-
 mained unfortunate in the Want of it;
 since even Those who had it not, were
 yet Accountable for their Actions; The
 Consequence is Plain and Necessary, that
 the Holy Scriptures are not the *Only*
 Method, whereby God hath been pleased
 to inform Men of their Duty; They
 were not the First, they were not the
 Universal, and consequently not the sole
 and perpetual, Instrument of all our Pri-
 vileges, and all our Obedience.

2. BUT

SERM.

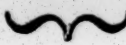
2. BUT, *Secondly*, Whatever Hopes

IV.

Men could by Nature have, these had no other Foundation, than a just and punctual Performance; and therefore Sin quite altered the Case, and made a farther Revelation necessary. What *St. Paul* says elsewhere of the Jewish Law, may with great Truth, and in a very good Sense, be affirmed of *All Scripture*, that it was *added because of Transgression*. To Persons thus concluded under Forfeiture, no Expectation justly could be cherished, no Succour or solid Comfort could arise, otherwise than from God's express Declaration, that he would condescend to fresh Conditions, and admit us to another and better Covenant, such as our laps'd and guilty State would bear. Hence sure it is, that the present Methods of Salvation are term'd, *The Secret of the Lord*, *The Mystery of our Redemption*, and the like; because These are some of the unfearchable, Depths of infinite Wisdom and Goodness; such as no Human Discourse could penetrate into, no natural Conclusions could infer: And, because God was perfectly Free in
this

this whole Matter, he let Men into the Knowledge of it, by such gradual Discoveries, as himself saw fit; and such as darken'd and degenerate Minds were capable of. This is the shining Ray then darted from above, to give our Souls once more the cheering Prospect of Bliss Divine, and Love Incomprehensible. 'Tis thus we are supported and assured, that our Judge is not Irreconcilable, that our Sickneses are not yet unto Death, provided We will lend a helping Hand, and not obstruct our own Recovery. But still all this was not a new Creation, but a Cure; and therefore, like Other Remedies, apply'd, only so far as the Disease required: In other Respects, it left Men as it found them, and the Benefits of it will be still more distinctly understood, if we be Diligent to observe,

3. *Thirdly*, THAT God, in all his Dealings with Mankind, does not act so much in Proportion to his Own Fulcils, as to Our Wants. And therefore we have Reason to look upon those Discoveries of his Will to be Perfect, which revealed, not all that could be revealed, but, all
that

SERMON. that Men had Occasion for. In this Sense,
 IV.  the more sparing Revelations heretofore were perfect in their Kind, though in Degree and Measure short of Ours. The Impressions of Reason at Man's first Creation, were so in some Sense, because that State needed no more. So were the Private and Personal Discoveries after the Fall; the Jewish Law and Predictions of the Prophets afterwards; Each of which had their Day, and proper Season; as the Manifestations of the Gospel have Theirs Now, which are *συντελεσται τῷ αἰῶνι* &c. the last concluding Dispensation; that which compleats, confirms, and closes up all the rest. In judging therefore the Perfection of Scripture, we must ever attend to the Design it serves, and its Sufficiency to compass that Design. For Example: In the Historical Part, we are not to expect a full and just Relation of all that happened in the World at that Time; no, nor of all that happened to that People, of whose Affairs it more professedly treats; A Competent Quantity of the main and most significant Passages will serve the Turn; such as draw
 down

down a just Account of our Blessed Sa-
viour, and wherein the Law and Polity
of the *Jews* were Types of Him, or of
the Christian Church.

SERM.
IV.

So again, The Prophecies do not fore-
tell all that should happen under the
Gospel, nor every Thing to be done by
our Lord himself; but are contented with
drawing the Principal Lines, and giving
Representations and Characters, so like
and lively, as, when the Son of God
should appear in Flesh, and Events come
to be compared with Predictions, might
render Men exceedingly to blame, if they
did not accept and regard That Person as
the promised Messias, in whom those
Descriptions so exactly center'd. Nay,
even in the Gospel itself, St. *John* makes
no Difficulty to own, that a World of
remarkable and wonderful Things done
by Christ, are not however left upon
Record; but that Enough are left to
build Mens Faith upon. Now, it can-
not be deny'd, but the All-wise God
could, under each of those Periods, have
inspir'd the Holy Pen-Men with all that
are omitted; or that he could, had it so
pleased

S E R M.

IV.

pleased him, have made but One Period, and revealed all together; But since he did not so, we have Reason to conclude, that the Measure of his Revelations is directed by the End of them; that he intended not the Scripture for a Repository of all Truths, in the simple and most comprehensive Sense of the Word; But of *all*, which were needful *to make Men wise unto Salvation*; such as their present Circumstances required, and what he intended they should be accountable for. And, as he would not be Niggardly in these Communications, so neither was he Profuse: Nay, from hence I argue,

4. *Fourthly*, THAT even all Truths, which may have any Tendency to direct Men in their Duty, are not particularly and expressly to be found there; nor is it at all necessary, or indeed, (Humanly speaking) possible, that they should. And This directly meets with an Opinion, unhappy in its Consequences, but entertained (it is to be hoped) out of an honest Zeal and well-meant Reverence for these Blessed Writings: That I mean of *Men not being allowed to do any Thing, for which*

which some express Command, or War- SERM.
IV.
rant, or at least Example, may not be
produced out of Scripture. I cannot now

stand to shew the Danger and Uncertainty of governing our Lives by the Examples even of Good Men; but shall endeavour to prove the Unreasonableness of this Rule in general, and to disengage Men from the many sad Suspenses and Snares, which it is apt to bring unwary Consciences under, by these following Particulars.

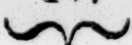
First, LET it be remembred, That our Obligation to obey the Scriptures, does not arise from their being Written, but from their being the Discoveries of God's Will, and Our Duty. Consequently, Whatever comes to my Knowledge as the Pleasure of God concerning me, hath the same binding Power upon my Conscience, be the Method of making it so known to Me, what it will. The Authority of the Law-giver, and the sufficient Promulging of the Law: These are the Things, that induce the Obligation to Obedience; And therefore, if God, who is the absolute and only

K

Master

S E R M. Master of my Conscience, have several
 IV. Ways of signifying his Pleasure; the
 particular Manner of doing it is accidental and foreign to this Binding Power, and makes not the least Difference in my Engagement to Submission and Obedience.

N o w, *Secondly*, We may be satisfy'd, that God not only did formerly, but that he does still, use other Methods of manifesting his Will, besides that of the written Word. There have been whole Nations, who, through a long Succession of Time, knew no other Law but Reason; To These, when God added a brighter Candle, he did not put out the old one, or forbid them to walk by its Light, so far as That was able to direct them. The very Divine Authority of Scripture, and the Being of the God from whence that Authority is derived, are Principles, arising from Common Reason. And, how absurd would it be, to allow no Standard of Truth in Religion, no Rule of Behaviour, but Scripture? When the Two Fundamental Truths of all Religion must be made out to us from
 other

other Principles, and cannot, with any SERM.
Propriety of arguing, be fetched from IV.
Scripture itself? 

Thirdly, THE very Temper and Composition of Scripture is such, as necessarily refers us to some other Rule. For This is a System of mixed and very different Duties. Some of Eternal and Universal Obligation; Others Occasional and Particular, Limited to Times, and Circumstances; and, when those Occasions and Circumstances ceased, the Matter of the Command was lost, and the whole Reason and Force of it sunk of course. This is observable more especially in the Jewish Dispensation, but it is likewise true in sundry other Cases. Now, these Things being oftentimes delivered promiscuously and in general Terms, Men must of necessity have recourse to some other Rule, to distinguish, and guide them, in making the just Difference, between the one and the other Sort. And This is what Equity and the Reason of the Thing must do, where the Word of God itself hath made no express Difference at all.

SERM.

IV.

Fourthly, THE Scriptures, as a Rule of Faith and Life, do not concern us, just as the Words and Syllables are set down there; but according to the true Sense, and rational Meaning of the Text. And, in order to just Resolutions of this kind, many Qualifications are requisite; A Mind truly Honest, and resign'd to the Will of God, sincere and unprejudiced; the being not only Content, but Desirous to learn; and ready to retract Errors, and reform Vices, when, upon a Fair Examination, they shall appear to be such. To This we must add Diligence, and Care, and Skill; such as may enable Men to compare, and reconcile, and form a Judgment out of the Scriptures; to consider the Contexts, the Occasions, the Expressions, the Genius of the Countries, and Proprieties of Languages, and to fix upon such Commodious Interpretations from hence, as may never set one Scripture at Variance with another. And where these Qualifications are not to be had, there a meek and quiet Spirit, an orderly Submission to honest and better Judgments, and enduring to be Ignorant in

in Matters above one's Reach. Now all S E R M.
this is the Work of a Man's own Under-
standing and Will, assisted by God's IV.
Grace; and all so necessary, that, with-
out such Application and Appeals to fair
unbias'd Reason, the very Word of
God it self may misguide and prove a
Snare to us.

Fifthly, THE Nature of Human Ac-
tions puts it out of dispute, that the
Scriptures alone can never be a full and
perfect Direction in Point of Duty. For
the Circumstances of Human Life are
infinite, and depend upon a Multitude of
Accidents, not to be foreseen, and con-
sequently not to be provided against.
Hence Laws must run in general Terms;
and sometimes the Intent of the Law is
best fulfilled, by going counter to the Let-
ter of it. In all such Cases therefore
Reason and Honesty must guide us to the
Fitness of the Thing, and great Scope is
necessarily left to Equity and Discretion.
I allow indeed, that God, who hath
contented himself with general Rules,
could have described all the Accidents
and Circumstances, which He cannot but

SER M. foresee and know exactly. But there is
 IV. no Reason, why He should, and a great
 deal why He should not. 'Tis much
 better, that he hath left us to draw general Rules into particular Practice, and put us upon the Trial of doing this fairly; of discharging a Good Conscience in positive Obedience, where he hath determined Things to Moral Good or Evil; and of following the Measures of Integrity and Expediency, where he hath left them indifferent and at large.

THE Sum then of this *First* Head may be easily drawn together, within the Compass of these few short Conclusions.

I. *First*, As to the Mysteries and Doctrines peculiar to the Christian Faith, such as the Incarnation and Satisfaction of our Blessed Saviour, the Justification of Sinners by Faith, the Assistances of the Holy Spirit, the Trinity of Persons in the Divine Essence, (which I make no Scruple to call a necessary and distinguishing Doctrine of the Christian Religion,) In these the Scriptures are our absolute and only Rule: For they are Branches
 of

of a new Covenant, Revelations of Stu-
pendous and Important Concern, setting
forth Free Acts of Mercy; such as de-
pend upon no necessary Causes in Na-
ture; such as concern'd not Man in his
primitive State; and therefore not with-
in the Ken of Reason. These could
come only from God, and upon Him we
are therefore to depend entirely for them.
So that, when there is sufficient Evidence
of His having deliver'd any Matters of
this kind, All the rest is to be taken up-
on Content; and his Truth and Infinite
Wisdom are a just Foundation of our Be-
lief, how far soever the Matter revealed
may exceed our Comprehension.

2. *Secondly*, IN Matters of Practice
the Scripture is our Supreme, though not
our Only Rule. Those Things, which
Reason and Nature teach, This enlarges
and refines upon, and oftentimes con-
firms with a fresh Sanction. It exalts
our Virtues, and directs us to proceed
upon nobler Principles; teaches some
Duties not to be known without it, gives
clearer Convictions of such as were
known imperfectly; leads us to Ends
K 1 above

SERM. above Nature; furnishes Means above
 IV. the Powers of Nature; proposes Rewards Heavenly and Divine; and helps us to do more than mere Men, by their own Discourse, could ever have done. So that Revelation does not quench the Light of Nature, but adds fresh Oil, and makes it burn the Brighter; And, by being more perfect, helping our Dimness and dark Sight, and taking place above all other Authorities, it is properly stiled by *David, A Candle to our Feet, and a Lantern to our Paths.* So that whatever this Word teaches, which we might otherwise have known, has a Double Tie upon us; and That, which either Want of Understanding, or Corruption of Mind, would have kept us in Ignorance of, when found here, is to be received with Submission and Reverence, as an inviolable Law; whatever Flesh, and Sense, and Worldly Wisdom, may suggest or object to the contrary.

Psalm. cxix.
 105.

3. *Thirdly,* THE Perfection of Scripture does not confine itself to such Matters of Faith and Practice, as are absolutely necessary to Salvation; but it is liberal, and well

well fraught with excellent Rules, both S E R M.
for improving our Knowledge, and adorn- IV.
ing our Profession. It consults the Beauty
and Gracefulness, as well as the Life and
Being of Christianity: It directs the
shining of our Light, and the winning
over others by our Prudence and Good
Example; and leaves us general Hints,
the Efficacy of which will depend upon
the Honesty and Discretion of particular
Applications to our own Personal Exi-
gencies and Conditions.

4. B U T, *Fourthly*, There are many
Cases, where Scripture can have nothing
at all to do, except by very remote Con-
sequences, and so far only, as is implied
in the foregoing Particular. Ten thou-
sand Actions of Human Life there are,
so trivial, as scarce to deserve the Delibe-
ration of a single Thought. And, to
expect Laws and Decisions from Almighty
God, in Things of no Importance, or
moral Good or Evil, were to bring his
Majesty into Contempt; and therefore
here Discretion is our only Guide. In
short, and to conclude this Argument:
The Written Word of God is to be
esteemed

SERM. esteemed Sufficient and Perfect; but This
 IV. is to be understood of having the Sufficiency of Means to the End; and what may serve the Purposes to which it was ordained. The Perfection is that of an Instrument; but then This, like all other Instruments, requires an honest, skilful, and diligent Hand, to manage and apply it Successfully. And it is no Disparagement to the Scripture's Character, that Some by neglecting, and Others by abusing it, still want that Saving Wisdom it might give: Nor does it at all take off from the Perfection of this Rule, that some Cases are so plain and obvious, as not to need its particular Directions; and that Others are of so little moment, as not to deserve them.

II. The Way being thus made plain, by rightly Stating the Perfection of Scripture, let us now proceed to the *Second* Part of our Business, which is, To instance in some general Arguments, which the Protestant Opinion of the Scripture's Sufficiency may very reasonably alledge for its self.

Now.

Now, in order to make Scripture a SERM.
IV.
Competent Guide, in the Cases that properly concern it, *Two* Things only are necessary; That it be Sufficiently particular and express, and that it be plain and intelligible. That as much be delivered there, as the Occasion requires; and, That it be delivered in such a Manner, as that Men may improve by it, and attain to the Knowledge of it. Both which, to any Man who considers the Uses of Scripture, appear to be so necessarily required, that the same General Arguments will prove Both; and These that follow (if I mistake not) may contribute something toward it.

First, A Consideration of the Author. Every Imperfection in the Effect is owing to some Failure in the Cause; a Want of Power, if it be a Necessary Cause; or a Want of Will, if it be a Sufficient and Free Cause. There was therefore excellent Reason, why St. *Paul* should begin his Character of the Scripture's Perfection, with an Account of its being *given by Inspiration of God*; This
In-

S E R M.

IV.

Introduction carrying in it a very Significant Argument to enforce what follows. For, where indeed should we expect Perfection, if not from Him, who is the Source and Sum of all Perfection? He, whose Power and Wisdom are infinite, was most likely to impress upon his own Ordinances such Marks of Excellency, as might distinguish them plainly, and convince the World they were His, by being worthy of Him: And He, whose Goodness and Mercy are the Eminent shining Attributes of the Divinity, might reasonably be presumed to exercise that Power and Wisdom, when an Occasion so important, as the Salvation of a whole World, call'd for it. His own mere Bounty put him upon the mysterious Work of our Redemption; and can we suppose, that the very Terms, upon which the Success and Efficacy of that Work depends, are not sufficiently stated and made known?

WE are told indeed, no Writing can be a sufficient Rule, because capable of different Constructions; and that some Living Interpreter is necessary, upon whose

whose Sense we may securely rely: But S E R M.
what Understanding is so short, as not to IV.
see the Weakness of this Argument? For
is any Thing spoken, which might not
be written? And, would not the same
Words, when written, continue to be as
full, as clear, as plain, and distinct, as
when spoken only? Is not any Man's
Discourse from his Tongue as liable to be
wrested and perverted, as that from his
Pen? If then that Living Interpreter
(whoever he be) might have his Sense
committed to writing; And, if that
Sense when not written, lies open to the
same Danger of being misunderstood, as
when it is written; then a Written Word
may be as plain and sufficient a Rule, as
an Oral one. And, if Almighty God
could express himself as plainly and
clearly as Man, (which to deny were most
absurd and impious,) then nothing hin-
ders, why the Dictates of the Holy Ghost,
written in the Bible, might not be as safe,
as full, as intelligible a Direction, as any
Interpretations, or Decrees, composed by
any living Persons, or Society of Per-
sons whatsoever: They might be so, I
say,

SERMON. say, which proves a Written Rule capable of equal Perfection with an Oral one. And, as the Nature of the Thing shews it capable, so the Goodness of God gives just Presumption of its actually being so. We are able indeed to give some Account, why Human Laws should be obscure; Men may not be always happy in their Expressions, or they may leave them intricate and dark, and studiously contrive some profitable Ambiguities: But God hath neither Frailty, nor Interest, to dispose him thus. He speaks on purpose to be understood; and what is spoken so as not to be understood, is so far forth, as if not spoke at all. To leave Men in Darkeness and Distress, unfurnished with Helps, the want of which must be their Eternal Ruin; this is what we think but ill agrees with the kind Inclinations he hath otherwise express'd for our Happiness. And this will appear yet more improbable, if we consider,

Secondly, WHAT the particular Matter is, of which the Scriptures chiefly consist, and are intended to instruct us in. This I have already said is *The Second*

cond Covenant with fallen Man; and S E R M.
that, what other Things are added there, IV.
are with Subservience to this Great De-
sign. And, can we suppose that these
Great Charters and Indentures are drawn
imperfectly? In Other Sciences there
may be many Common Principles and
Helps deriv'd from abroad; and these
are such as shine in some measure by each
others Light. But the Doctrines and
Mysteries of Christianity are not in the
Power of Nature or Art to discern; we
have no further Insight here, than what
the Light from Heaven directs us to; and
whatever of this kind God hath not made
known to us, we are condemned to Doubts
and Difficulties invincible, and can never
bring our selves to know it at all.

Thirdly, The Sufficiency and Plainness
of Scripture are both of them strongly
implied in Faith and Obedience being
made the Conditions of Everlasting Sal-
vation; and Unbelief and Disobedience
threaten'd with Hell and Damnation, to
as many as live under the Knowledge and
Light of the Gospel. For, if Belief and
Practice must bring us to Heaven; then
sure

SERM.

IV.

sure God hath left a Compleat System of all Things necessary to be believed or done; And, if Men shall be damned for not believing and not practising; then sure those Directions are sufficiently plain. Especially too, if we remember, that these Conditions are not calculated for the Wise, or the Learned, or the Great only; but imposed indifferently upon all Degrees and Capacities of Men, of what Size soever their Understandings or their Attainments be. For in regard no Man is capable of Believing or Doing, what he is not capable of knowing the Sense and Meaning of; it must needs follow, that, in the Terms of Salvation, God hath descended to the Weak and the Common Man; and made that which is necessary to All, easy and plain to All. The Extremity of *marking what is done amiss, who, says the Psalmist, may abide?* But, would not the marking and punishing what could not but be done amiss, be a much more insupportable Extremity? And yet, admitting, that Men are condemned to Everlasting Torments, for Failure in that Duty, of which God never gave

gave them sufficient Means of Informa-
tion, I cannot apprehend, but that this is
the Case with them. The Force of which
Argument in general, That God must
needs have made sufficient Discoveries of
his Will, is so confessedly evident; that
the only Fault our Adversaries find with
us for alledging it, is the confining these
Discoveries to Scripture only. To justify
which Inference, I add in the

S E R M.
IV.

Fourth Place, T H A T we have no
equal Evidence for any other Supplemen-
tary Declaration of God's Will; and
therefore we have Reason to look upon
the Scripture, as a full and Sufficient one.
* Now, that such Evidence was absolute-
ly needful, appears from hence; That
whatsoever mends and fills up the Mea-
sure of any Other Law, and to which
we must have our last Recourse and Ap-
peal, does, by that Means, acquire not on-
ly equal, but in some sort a superior, Au-
thority to what went before; and there-
fore, to be sure, it ought to have its own

L

Au-

* In his quæ aperte in scripturâ posita sunt, inveniuntur
illa omnia quæ continent fidem morèsq; vivendi, scem
scilicet atque Charitatem. *Augustin de Doctrin. Christian.*
Lib. II. Cap. 9

SER M. Authority, at least as well confirm'd, as

IV.

That which it pretends to perfect. Now, the Scriptures command our Assent and Obedience, as coming from God: That they came from Him we are assured, by their Authors giving Proper and Authentick Testimonies of a Commission and Inspiration truly Divine; That the Miracles, in which that Testimony consisted, were really performed, we have the Report of Enemies as well as Friends to their Doctrine; The Proof of Infinite Converts won over by them, contrary to all the Interests and Inclinations of Flesh and Blood; and Lastly, The concurring Consent of the Church Universal in all Ages, which alone (all Circumstances consider'd) is an Evidence even Credible in itself. 'Till therefore the Advancers of Traditions and an Infallible Guide on the One Hand, and till the Pretenders to private Illuminations on the Other, can bring equal Evidence for themselves; but especially, while they continue the darkest Controversies in all Religion; we are not to be blamed for not admitting them into Competition; and shall do better

ter to suspect these Pretences of Vanity, and Enthusiasm, and Project; than, by admitting them, to draw such a Meaning upon the Words of this Text, as might easily be shewed to introduce an inspired Apostle, talking neither good Argument, nor so much as Coherent and common Sense.

S E R M.
IV.
~~~~~

THE Sum then of my *Second* Head is This: That, according to all we can reasonably conceive of God, he must needs have made some Competent Provision for Men to understand their Duty; They cannot escape eternal Ruin, without the Knowledge of it; This Knowledge, in the Points peculiarly Christian, could come to them by Divine Revelation Only; It does not appear, that God hath signaliz'd and distinguish'd any Method or Rule of this kind, in so eminent a Manner, as he hath done the Scriptures; and therefore we have reason to believe and to respect the Scriptures, as that competent Provision. And now, having gone through such general Arguments as seem most necessary, I come to the *Third* and *last* Thing, which is,

SER M. III. To shew in particular, as briefly  
 IV. as I can, How the Scriptures answer this  
 Character, with Regard to the several  
 Instances of their Usefulness, mention'd  
 in the Text.

1. *First*, St. Paul says, The Scripture is *profitable for Doctrine*; by which is commonly understood a Declaration of such Truths, as are necessary to be believed. The Sum of what is requisite in this Point, consists of a right Information concerning God, and our selves: What He is, and what We are and hope to be; What he hath done for our Sakes, and How we may reap the Benefit of it in our own Persons, and become acceptable in His Sight. And of this the Scripture gives a large and clear Account. It traces us up to our first Head; points to the Rock whence we were hewn; describes our Happy and our Healthful State; tells when, and how, our Innocence was lost, and sets forth both the Sicknefs and the Cure. It presents us with the leisurely Advances towards it; The Personal Revelations to the Patriarchs; The Rites and Figures of *Moses's Law*; The clearer

clearer Predictions and more refined Pre-SERM  
cepts of the Prophets; and These, accom-IV.  
modated to the several Stages of the  
World, and tempered all in such Pro-  
portion, as the Body diseased gathered  
Strength to digest them. At last, when  
the Fulness of Time was come, and  
Matters ripe for the last and most perfect  
Revelation; it shews us the Saviour of  
the World, the Son of God, and in Him  
all those Shadows and rough imperfect  
Strokes finished and filled up, all those  
Prophecies centring together, with mar-  
vellous Harmony and Consent. To  
These I might add the significant Provi-  
dences of God to his People, the *Jews*;  
whereby St. *Paul* says they became ἡμῶν  
τύποι, Patterns, and Images of the Chris-  
tian Age, no less than in their Law and  
Way of Worship. I might observe the  
mighty Care and Art of filling every  
Book with Significations of the Messiah,  
his Character, and his Approach; some-  
times by Prophecies aiming directly at him,  
sometimes by mix'd and more obscure In-  
timations, and those Breakings-out of the  
Spirit from other Subjects and Persons,

L 3

into



SERM. into Expressions too Lofly and Magnificent,  
IV. cent, to be literally and ftrictly true of any but of Him. But, which comes nearer Home, here we have our Souls raised to higher and jufter Notions of God and Goodnefs; we are taught to worship him in Spirit and in Truth, a Service moft fuitable to the Majesty of His Nature, and the Dignity of our Own: We fee the Adorable Myftery of the Son of God in Flefh, and a Human Body exalted to the Right Hand of the Majesty on high; a Perfon truly Divine converfing with Men, courting them to their Happinefs, preffing, importuning, nay, which is moft of all, dying for Them, that They may live for ever. And, whatever myfterious and intricate Paflages the Scripture may contain, for the Exercise, fhall I fay, or for the Humiliation of Men Wife in their own Conceits; yet Thefe Matters, which make the Historical Account of our Redemption, are related in Circumftances fo natural and yet fo moving, in Language fo eafy and fo expreffive too; that the moft Scrupulous, if a fair and honeft Reader, may  
be

be fettled and convinced, and the plain-  
est and grofseft Understanding may be  
enlighten'd and edified by them. For,  
whatever Darknefs and Mists may Now  
obscure these saving Truths, it is not  
from themselves, or their original Ambi-  
guities, so much as from the studied  
Niceties of Subtil and Designing Men;  
Who, under Pretence of distinguishing  
and explaining, have rather confounded  
and render'd them Unintelligible; and ma-  
ny Times distinguished away even Truth  
and Piety itself: But, blessed be God, we  
are not utterly at the Mercy of these Men;  
for, to our Comfort, the Apostle ob-  
serves,

S E R M.

IV.



2. *Secondly*, THAT the Scripture is like-  
wise Profitable for *Reproof*; by which is  
commonly understood the Confuting of  
Errors and corrupt Opinions, which op-  
pose or impair the Truth. \* Thus among  
the *Jews*, the Law and the Testimony  
was the Touch and Tryal, to which all

L. †

new

---

\* Hai. viii. 20. Matt. xxii. 29. Mark xii. 24. Ἡμεῖς  
τοῖσιν, ὃ τιν πρὸς αἰρετικῶν μαχόμεθα, καὶ καταπλεούμεθα ἐν-  
τεύθεν, καὶ ἰχυρούμεθα. seu ut alii legunt, ἰχυροὶ ἐσόμεθα.  
Πᾶσα γὰρ γυνή, &c. καὶ ἵνα τὰ μὲν ἔχῃ, τὰ δὲ μὴ ἔχῃ, ὃ  
καὶ τοῦτο ἐν αὐτῇ. Chrysost. in Johan. Hom. XL.

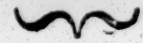
SER M. new Pretenders were to be brought. Thus  
 IV. our Saviour expressly attributes the Error  
 of the *Sadduces*, concerning the Refur-  
 rection and a Future State, to their not  
 knowing the Scriptures. And to the  
 same Purpose, the Apostle here sends *Ti-*  
*mothy* to the Scriptures, as a Defence a-  
 gainst those Corrupt and Perilous Times,  
 foretold in the Beginning of this Chap-  
 ter. The earnest Exhortations of all the  
 Primitive Fathers, to be much conversant  
 in these Holy Books; Their placing all  
 the Mischief of their Divisions to the  
 Account of neglecting to do; the set-  
 ting the Two Testaments in the midst  
 of the Ancient and Purest Councils, as a  
 common Umpire between all contending  
 Parties; and infinite Testimonies and  
 Commendations to this purpose, shew  
 most evidently, that the Written Word  
 was always look'd upon as the Standard  
 of Doctrine and Faith; That, to which  
 all ought to have recourse, to submit to,  
 and be finally concluded by. Tradition-  
 ary Articles, and Infallible Interpreters,  
 had then no place; nor was it requisite  
 they ever should: For, though St. *Peter*  
 says,



says, some Scriptures *were wrested by some Men to their own Destruction*, yet he acquaints us withal, how they came to be so. They were, he says, *the unlearned and unstable*, that did it; Men not well principled, and of a restless Temper. And if People will come to this Rule, with perverse unquiet Minds, with a Spirit of Frowardness, and Cavil, and Contention, they may, no doubt, confound the clearest Things: Besides (which makes the Objection much less formidable) St. Peter says, the *τὰ δύσκολα*, Passages *hard to be understood*, were principally concerned in this racking of the Sense. And so long as Captious Wits exercise upon These only, the Consequence is not so very great. They are the necessary Points, in which we maintain the Sufficiency of Scripture; and I hope it hath been proved, that what is not full and plain, cannot be necessary. If Men would read the Bible with Honesty and Diligence, with Meekness and Modesty, the World would quickly come to a good Agreement in Things requisite to Salvation; and for the rest, we may enter-

SE R M.

IV.



2 Pet. iii.  
16.

SERM. entertain different Notions, and yet all  
 IV. Sides be safe and quiet. For would  
 Men but preserve all that Charity and  
 and Good Temper, which becomes Dis-  
 putes of small Importance; it would sig-  
 nify but little, whether such Controver-  
 sies were ever agreed, or not. When Our  
 Eternal State is brought into hazard; when  
 the Peace of the Publick, or the Order of  
 the Church is broken; when private  
 Friendships cease, and Misunderstandings  
 and Bickerings arise; These are not the  
 Effects of Difference in Opinion, but of  
 the Vanity and Indiscretion, the Intem-  
 perate Heats and bitter Zeal, of those  
 who differ, and, not content to differ on-  
 ly, mismanage and misunderstand Mat-  
 ters. In short, *Holding the Faith in  
 Unity of Spirit, and in the Bond of  
 Peace* both, is best promoted by *Righte-  
 ousness of Life*. And, whoever shall  
 examine the Rise and Growth of Here-  
 sies and Schisms, will find, that Craft, and  
 not Ignorance, hath generally been at the  
 Bottom. Pride, and Avarice, and Ambi-  
 tion, Envy and Licentiousness, Unrea-  
 sonable Pertinaciousness, and a Desire of  
 Popu

Popularity, and in one word, not so much the Want as the Abuse of Wit; These are the rank Weeds, that choak the Good Seed, that make the Word Unfruitful, and sometimes even ensnaring. And, to clear the Soil of these Nuisances must be every Man's own Care. In short, God hath done as much for us, as it became Him to do; he hath left Necessary Truth plain and obvious; he will be gracious to innocent and unaffected Ignorance and Mistakes; and therefore, though All may be deceived in unnecessary Points, yet None shall be deceived to his own Hurt and Ruin, except those, who wilfully deceive themselves, or make it their Business to pervert and disturb others.

S E R M.

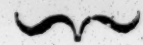
IV.

3. *Thirdly*, THE next Instance of the Scripture's Profitableness is in *Correction*; that is, according to the common Acceptation of the Word, Reforming of Manners. And in this indeed consists the peculiar Glory of Christianity, that it makes the World better, sweetens Mens Tempers, purifies their Hearts and Affections, tames their wild Passions, and checks



SERM. checks those Exorbitances, which render

IV. them Odious to God, Uneasy to themselves, and Troublesome to one another. That no Man therefore might have Ignorance to pretend, this Doctrine, like a Light hung out from Heaven, descends the Rocks and Shelves, which threaten us with Shipwrack of Faith, and a good Conscience. And if it happen, ( as God knows it does, and often will, even to the Best of Men ) that we be driven upon these Rocks ; we are then instructed, exhorted, entreated, conjured, to recover our selves by speedy and serious Repentance ; to call up all the Powers of Reason and Religion ; and, to quicken us the more, we are told the Dangers of Delay, the sad Doom of Obstinacy and Impenitence : We are kept in Awe, even from our secret Sins, by the constant Presence, and strict Observation, of an All-seeing Judge ; One, from whose Thunder no Covert can shelter, and from whose Eye no Darkness can hide us ; One, who does not only pursue us to our Closets and Beds, but unlocks our very Hearts and Reins, and sees all the Monsters, all the de-



deformed Race of evil Thoughts and Actions, even in their Embryo and crude Conception. Here we have Vice unmask'd, and shewn in its Native Devilishness; as the Blackest and basest Thing in itself, the most Deceitful in its Appearances, the most Destructive in its Effects: The Mother of Sorrow, and Shame, and Death, that cheats us with Imaginary Pleasures of a Moment, and Satisfaction that flee from us in the very Instant of snatching them; but leaves real and lasting Pains behind, abandons us to all the Horrors of Guilt and Confusion, Amazement and Despair; sows all the Seeds of Discord and Disorder, breaks all Faith, cuts the Bands of Society in sunder, and, after all the Agonies of Mind, Pains of Body, private and publick Miseries on Earth, plunges Men at last into the Bottomless Pit; a Place of Vengeance and fruitless Remorse; the Gnawings of a Worm that never dies, and the Burnings of a Flame never to be quenched. These are the *Terrors of the Lord* to persuade Men to be Wiser; and stupid sure are They, whom these will not persuade.

2 Cor. v.

11.

ONCE

SERM. IV. ONCE more, *Fourthly*, The Scripture is said to be Profitable for *Instruction in Righteousness*, that is, The directing us how we may please, and become like unto God. To this Purpose it prescribes pure and holy Hearts, clean Hands, well-govern'd Passions, a strict and watchful Guard against Temptations, a Mind easy and resign'd to Providence, raised above the present World, and therefore Moderate in its Desires, and reserv'd in its Enjoyments. It consults the Benefit of all Conditions, and prescribes Virtues proper for every Relation and Capacity of Human Life : It invites to the Practice of These, by their own Loveliness and Beauty, by the Satisfaction they bring to our Selves, and the Benefit they are of to Others : For if a Gracefulness of Behaviour, and perpetual Consistency with a Man's self; if the Ease and Transport of one's Own Mind, and the Commendation of other People; if Health, and Peace, and mutual Happiness; if the Blessings, which a Good Life hath a natural Tendency to produce, and those which it gives a Title to, by recommend-  
ing



ing Men to the more Especial Favour and Protection of God; if the aspiring to be like Him here, and the Assurance of being Eternally Happy with him hereafter: If These, I say, have any Charms, (and surely Charms they have to all, but lost and stupified Souls,) then it must be acknowledged, that Men want no sufficient *Instruction in Righteousness* while they enjoy the Scripture.

SER. M.  
IV.

THESE are the Four Topicks resulting from the most usual Sense of the Text; but if we interpret *παρρησιας*, as some do, of *strengthening that which is Weak*; and instead of *Correction*, understand *Support to feeble and dejected Minds*; then St. Paul's Observation to the *Romans*, will be included here also, where he says, that *these Things were written for our Learning, that We, through Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.* And here, Blessed God! What Consolation does the Scripture, what rather does it not, supply us with on these Occasions? What firm Grounds of a steadfast Confidence in an Almighty and Compassionate Father, a Father

SERM.

IV.

help; a Father, who chastises because he loves, and only grieves with a Design to profit? What Patterns of distressed and injured, and of rewarded and successful Virtue does It set before our Eyes, and bids us arm our Minds by Their Examples? The Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, but above all, the Meek and Suffering Jesus! And here, how Glorious a Scene does it draw? what Triumphs, what Crowns does it propose? How ravishing a Prospect does it open, by those Assurances, that all who suffer for and with him, shall also live and reign with him for ever! The sweet Transports of a Good Conscience, the Supporting Sense of a reconciled God, but especially the Experience of his Favour, and the Earnests and Expectation of a Bless'd Eternity; These break in upon Good Men, like Light through a Cloud, and are able, if well and warmly applied, to charm all our Griefs, and all our Fears; to calm and smooth our very roughest Passage through this Valley of Tears, and to take out the Sting of  
that

last greatest Terror to poor feeble Men, S E R M.  
by softning, nay, even recommending, IV.  
Temporal Death itself to us.

O WELCOME therefore Holy Religion to Us dark wretched Mortals! Welcome, thou Blest, thou Powerful Book: Pure and Clear, as the Place from whence thou comest; and Wise and Good, like Him, whose Spirit form'd thee. And may (my Christian Brethren) may This be ever First and Best in our Esteem; most in our Thoughts, our Studies, and Desires: may This be writ entire, and fairly copied, not in our Memories only, but our Hearts, and thence shine Bright in all our Conversation. And Reason good there is, why This Divine Volume should have the Choicest of all our Labours; for This will sanctify our other Studies, enlarge our Understandings, refine and exalt our Souls, and teach us, not only to excel Others, but Daily to excel our Selves. This is the only Exception to the Preacher's Character, *In much of all other Knowledge, there is much Sorrow*, but This makes us wise with Pleasure and Safety; not only wiser



S E R M. for this World, than the rest of our Learning can ; but, which is best of all, and a Prerogative peculiar to its self alone, This makes us wise for Heaven, and to Salvation.

IV.  
~~~~~

ALL Thanks therefore and due Praise be render'd to our Gracious God, for these his Revelations ! Praise, for their General Benefit and Influence ; but double Praise for those Advantages, by which we have not only Leisure, but Obligations and Indispensable Engagements, to employ our selves in those Holy and Heavenly Studies ; Praise, for the Bounty of those venerable Saints, whose Beneficence hath Dedicated so many Souls to God, and made Provision for winning over Others by Their Holy Labours, so long as Time shall last. Praise lastly, for the Shine of Their good Examples, who, in their several Stations and Proportions, have contributed to the Advancement of Learning and Religion ; whose Names, as well to testify our Gratitude, as to provoke our Selves and Others to good Works, and the like Labour of Love, it is now my Duty to rehearse ; and may the Recital

Scripture Stated, &c. 163

cital at this, and at all other Times, SERM.
answer the Ends of so Pious an Insti- IV.
tution. 

Here followed the Commemoration of
BENEFACTORS.

*To God, the Father, Son, and Holy
Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now
and for evermore. Amen.*





SERMON V.

PREACH'D at

St. P A U L's

Before the

Sons of the Clergy.



To the most Reverend Father in God,

T H O M A S,

By Divine Providence, Lord Archbishop
of *Canterbury*, (Primate and Metro-
politan of all *England*, and) President
of the Corporation of the Sons of the
Clergy.

May it please your GRACE,



*I condescending favourably to
accept this Discourse, when
published, to promote the
great End for which it was
at first compos'd: That of exciting Piety
and*

DEDICATION.

165

and Charity, in a Society particularly happy in your Grace's presiding over it. A Society bless'd with a Succession of Reverend and Religious Prelates; but never more signally so, than now, that Your Grace hath been pleas'd to take it into Your peculiar Care. The Eminent Station You have most deservedly attained in the Church, is our Honour and Privilege: And the Lustre of so bright an Example is both a Pattern to Us, and a powerful Inducement to All who are disposed to do us Good. The Members of this Body will be exceedingly to blame, if They shall neglect to imitate (so far as their respective Capacities permit) the Virtues of their Head; and Others, in whom Mine or better Arguments may move Compassion to the Distress'd Relicts of the Clergy, will now no longer be able to excuse themselves, by the too common Pretence of having their Charity stifled or misemploy'd.

For this Reason, my Lord, when I found my self obliged to commit this Sermon to the World, I presume to endeavour the making it yet more serviceable to my

M 3

Brethren,

SERM.
V.
~

SERM. *Brethren, by begging the Recommendation of Your Grace's Patronage. Though*
V. *not for this Reason only; since it gives me at the same Time an Occasion of thankfully acknowledging Your Grace's Favour to my self: Which I shall always study to preserve, and express a due Sense of, as well by my hearty Prayers, that Your Grace may long continue a Publick Blessing to this Church and Nation, as by my constant Care to approve my self, in all possible Instances of Duty and Respect,*

My LORD,

Your Grace's most Obedient

Son and Servant,

Dec. 13. 1697.

G. STANHOPE.



TITUS i. 6.

--- *Having faithful Children, not accused of Riot, or unruly.*



THE particular Occasion of this Epistle, and the Capacity of the Person to whom it is directed, are clearly contained in the Verse before my Text. *For this Cause* (says St. Paul) *left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the Things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I appointed thee.* A Power (it seems) there was, even then of giving necessary Directions, of reforming Things amiss, of constituting proper Officers to teach and preside in Spiritual Affairs: A Power, by St. Paul's own Appointment lodged in one Single Person, at whose Hands the rest should receive their Authority, and to whom, as their Superintendent, they were accountable for the Use of it. The Difficulty this Apostle was concern'd to provide a-

168 *A Sermon preach'd before*

S E R M. gainst, relates not to the true Seat, but to
 V. the fit Exercise of this Power ; nor was
 the Point in question, Who had the
 Right of Ordaining ; but, What Persons
Titus, who was confes'd to have it, ought
 to look upon, as duly qualified for this
 holy Function, and most important Trust.

O F how great Consequence it is to
 Religion, that They, who minister in
 Holy Things, should be Men of un-
 blemish'd Character, The Reason of
 the Thing, the Power of Example, and
 the Consent of all Mankind, abundantly
 convince us. Those Impious Enemies
 to God and Goodness, who have not yet
 arrived at the harden'd Impudence of fly-
 ing in the very Face of Both, by level-
 ling directly at the Doctrines themselves,
 have always thought their wicked Ends
 well served, if they could wound them by
 that oblique Glance, of fastning any no-
 torious Scandal upon that Order of Men,
 who teach and press these Doctrines upon
 others. And so again, All zealous and
 prudent Assertors of Piety have found it
 highly necessary, that this should come
 recommended to the World, by the Prac-
 tice

the Sons of the Clergy. 169

rice of Them, who undertake to propa- SERM.
gate and promote it. For Truth and V.
Virtue never shine so bright, never per-
swade so successfully, never attract so
irresistibly, as when illustrated, adorn'd,
enforc'd, by the Beauties, the Charms,
the even demonstrative Evidence, of a
Holy Conversation.

HENCE, I presume, St. *Paul*, de-
signing to give Rules of Behaviour for
Christians in general, begins with those,
whose Actions are of the greatest In-
fluence; and forbids, that Any should be
a Preacher or Governor, who was not
likely to be also an Ornament and a Pattern
to the Church: That such should, by
their Conduct in a private Capacity,
shew what might be expected from them,
when exalted to a Publick. And, in re-
gard this Exaltation was for the Benefit
of others, a Single and Personal Virtue
was not esteem'd sufficient. The Care
and Abilities of such a Person, to in-
struct and oversee the House of God, as
a Spiritual Father, would best be mea-
sured by the Condition of his own Fa-
mily at home. And therefore to some
other

SERM. other Accomplishments more immediately regarding himself, enjoin'd in the Beginning of this Verse, this is added here, as no less indispensable, that every one admitted to the Charge of a Bishop, have *faithful Children, not accused of Riot, or unruly.*

It cannot surely be expected, that I should spend any Part of Your Time, or my own, in proving the Pertinence of a Discourse from these Words to the Occasion of our present Meeting. For, Who that thinks at all, can suffer himself to doubt, whether the same good Principles, which these Fathers were obliged to infuse, their Children were not equally oblig'd to cultivate and improve? And if a Dissolute and Disorderly Family were a Bar to the Master from obtaining Episcopal Jurisdiction; the Scandal reflected back upon Persons already advanced to that Dignity, by Posterity, by no means such as this Descent requires they should be, must needs be granted, not a foul Imputation only, but one of the blackest Instances of Guilt, which Men can draw upon their Con-

the Sons of the Clergy. 171

Consciences. This will appear more fully S E R M.
by and by, when we come to consider V.
the Particulars I have to speak to from
the Text.

As little, in the mean while, need I labour to prove, that this whole Assembly of our Brethren are concerned in the Text; notwithstanding all of us have not the Honour of deriving our Pedigree from the Fathers and Governors of the Christian Church. St. *Paul* himself hath remov'd this Objection, by prescribing the very same Conditions to Deacons, (1 Tim. iii. 12.) *Let the Deacons* (says he there) *be the Husbands of one Wife, ruling their Children and their own Houses well.* Now, if the same Qualifications be requisite for an inferior Degree; it must needs follow, that that middle Order, which the Necessities of the Church introduc'd afterwards, must be under the like Engagements, in proportion as the Quality of their Station, and the Importance of that Parochial Trust repos'd in them, render such good Examples profitable.

THIS

172 *A Sermon preach'd before*

S E R M. THIS is so plain, so acknowledg'd a
 V. Truth, so well consider'd, no question,
 by all in that Capacity, that I will not,
 I ought not to suppose Care or Exhortation wanting in any of that Reverend Part of this Audience, to whom the Words of my Text are more immediately directed: But since we all appear this Day under another Character; and are to be address'd to, not as Heads, but Members and Branches of such Families: Permit me, *Fathers and Brethren of our most holy Profession*, so to order my Discourse upon this Subject, that the Part we all have in the Text, by virtue of that Relation in particular, may be distinctly understood. So shall They (if any such there be among us) who do not attend to this Obligation to Holiness, be instructed or awakened by the Arguments I have to offer; and, by the yet more powerful Example of that Piety and Prudence in You, which ought to kindle their Zeal, and provoke their most diligent Imitation.

I. Now

the Sons of the Clergy. 173

SERM.

V.

I. Now in order hereunto I shall, *First of all*, fully and clearly explain the several Qualifications prescribed in my Text, for Children of the Clergy.

II. *Secondly*, I shall endeavour to enforce These, by Motives proper, for this Audience especially, to be perswaded by.

III. And then I shall, in the *Third* and Last Place, conclude with some short Address to some particular Sorts of Persons, more immediately relating to the Business of this Day.

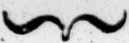
I BEGIN with the Qualifications themselves, and They are Three. (1.) *That the Children of the Clergy be faithful.* (2.) *That they be not accused of Riot.* And (3.) *That they be not unruly.*

I. *First*, IT is required that they be *faithful*. By which is not meant in this Place

174 *A Sermon preach'd before*

S E R M. Place that moral Virtue, commonly distinguish'd by the Name of *Fidelity* or *Common Honesty*; but the Knowledge and Sense of those Principles, which above all others tend most to make Men just and true; even the Belief and competent Understanding of the Christian Religion. For, in the early Days of this Epistle, when the Gospel was but just setting out into the World; frequent Instances were to be found of nearest Relations differing in their Perswasions. Accordingly, many Rules are given in Scripture for the mutual Deportment of Persons under such divided Circumstances, that Diversity of Opinions might not draw on that worse and more pernicious Consequence, of Uncharitableſs, and alienated Affections, and domestick Strife. Now in that State of the Church, tho' every private Christian was not presently condemn'd, because he had not brought over the rest of his Family; yet none was thought fit to be trusted with a publick Charge in the Church, who had not given this Proof of his Ability and Zeal in the Service of the Truth. And
hence

V.



† Cor. vii.
x Pet. iii.

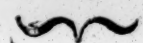
hence St. *Paul* pronounces it necessary, S E R M.
for every Bishop to have *Faithful Chil-* V.
dren, that is, such as were *Believers*,
Converted to, or Educated in the Chris-
tian Religion, Entred into Covenant with
God by Baptism, and so of that Num-
ber and mystical Body, which are often
styled in Scripture-Phrase, *The Faithful*. Ephes. i. 1.
Col. i. 2

WE live not now, 'tis true, in an
Age of violent Persecution, and the same
profest Opposition against the Gospel, by
Jewish or by *Pagan* Superstition: But,
which perhaps is worse and more ensnaring,
in the midst of Hypocrisy and Artifice,
of Schism and Faction, of Error manifold,
and shameless Heresy, and Vice trium-
phant: Among Men, who deny and dis-
grace their Profession; Either deform-
ing the Truth by Additions of Man's in-
venting: Or else mangling and maiming
it, by cutting off God's express Revela-
tions; who interpret and distinguish all
Religion away, till they have brought it
down to the Model of their own Notions,
and subvert the proper Grounds of all
Divine Faith. And if This be, as it but
too manifestly is, our Case; you see, with-

out

S E R M.

V.



out any Enlargement of mine, what Care is necessary to preserve those Principles and that Religion pure, which our Fathers of this Eſtabliſh'd Church have inſtill'd into our Minds : A Church, whoſe Diligence and Wiſdom is particularly viſible, in her familiar, eaſy, and plain Methods of teaching early Piety ; and by a ſtedfaſt Adherence to whoſe Doctrines and Diſcipline, we ſhall take the beſt Courſe of *ſaving our ſelves from this untoward Generation.*

THUS much then is our Duty in point of Faith, with regard to the looſeſt and moſt vulgar Notion of the Thing, as it denotes, a Perſuaſion of the Truth, and is oppoſed to falſe and dangerous Opinions. But if we take it, as we may and ought, for that active Principle, by which all we do well is inſpir'd, invigorated, conducted ; a great deal more muſt be underſtood requiſite under this *First* Particular : For how common, and how fatal an Error do we find it, for Men to receive, and readily acknowledge Doctrines, without attending as they ought to their juſt Force and natural Conſequences ?

the Sons of the Clergy. 177

sequences? To cry out with those *Jews* S F R M.
of old, *The Temple of the Lord are* V.
These, and value themselves for Ortho- Jer. vii.
dox, while yet their Lives are downright
Heathen, and what they abhor to admit
in Terms and Form, is without any scruple
out-done in Wickedness of Actions.
Now this Inconsistence of Practice and
Profession is what true Faith always pro-
vides against. It applies it self warmly
to the Affections, draws them to a Com-
pliance with the Judgment, makes the
Tree put forth Fruits agreeable to the
Stock, and suffers no Man to allow him-
self in Things, which his sober and more
considerate Thoughts cannot but con-
demn. In short, it makes us Christians
in Deed, as well as in Name and in
Word; and teaches us, that their Con-
demnation is and ought to be double, who
deprave the Truth with that worst of Er-
rors, an Ungodly Life. Do not imagine
then, my Brethren, that the best Scheme
of Doctrines, how well soever under-
stood, or constantly maintain'd, will be
sufficient; if they, who hold these, dif-
fer nothing in Practice, from the Wretches,
N who

178 *A Sermon preach'd before*

S E R M. who deny or blaspheme them. Religion must begin in sound Persuasions, but it must never end there: For the true Intent of all Religion is, to reform Mens Manners; and in order to this, it begins with instructing their Understandings, and giving them a right Judgment of Things. But better is His Case, who, out of honest unaffected Ignorance, does not his Master's Will; than His, who knows, and does, nay, in despite of all that Knowledge, persists in doing, the Contrary. The Scandal upon these Primitive Bishops had been greater, and the Objection against them more just, if they had suffer'd their *Believing* Children to lead the Lives of *Unbelievers*. And therefore the Apostle adds Two Qualifications more, no less essential to his Purpose than the former; and requires of Them, and in proportion of Us also, what I am now proceeding to explain in the Second Place, *viz.*

2. THAT they be *not accused of Riot*. The Word is of a large Extent, and signifies all that Profuseness and Debauchery, which profligate and sensual Wretches abandon

the Sons of the Clergy. 179

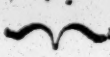
abandon themselves to. Vices deform'd S E R M.
and unnatural; such as unman us quite, V.
quench and destroy that Light and No-
ble Principle, which should distinguish us
from Brutes. Consequently, They, of all
others, must offer the greatest Violence
to Christianity, which proposes to refine
upon Reason, to establish the Sovereignty
of the Mind more firm, and carry Hu-
man Nature higher, by teaching it to as-
pire after Joys Future and Eternal, to
abstract as much as conveniently may be
from Flesh and Sense, and improve the
Rational into a Divine Life. And if
these Crimes, so just, so foul a Reproach
to Christians and Men in general, can be
render'd in any Case yet more monstrous
and abominable; it will be done by that
aggravating Circumstance, when We of
this Society shall prostitute our selves to
Folly and Shame. For certainly, such
never more absolutely forget who they
are, never more vilely stain their Blood,
than when Extravagance and Drunken-
ness, Sensuality and Lewdness, and any
manner of Impurity or Excess, become
the Pollutions of that Degenerate Seed of

180 *A Sermon preach'd before*

SERM. *Aaron*, who ought to be *Holy to the*
V. *Lord, every one of them.*

SUCH is the Guilt of any notorious Instances in this kind: But, if I mistake not the Apostle's Meaning, he requires somewhat more than the not being Scandalous for such Vices; and by saying, we ought not to be *accused* of Riot, expects that we should not lie under so much as the Censure and mere Imputation of it. And this is a Difficulty indeed. For I need not say, how much the Clergy and their Families stand like the common Mark for Censure and Detraction; how the Debauch'd and Dissolute expose our very Character, and let fly their Insolence and Scorn, their Ribaldry and wicked Wit at us, without regard to God, or Truth, or Good Manners. But This is what we may very well despise. That, which seems of more melancholy Consideration, is, that some who pretend a Respect for the Order, and a Zeal for Religion, do yet, upon Difference of Judgment, Personal Prejudice, or something yet less unaccountable, set themselves with all the Artifice of a sly sanctified Malice, to ob-
serve

the Sons of the Clergy. 181

serve our Behaviour, exercise a busy and S E R M.
envious Curiosity, asperse our Good, ag- V.
gravate our Evil, (for we are Men too, ) and what
is of indifferent Temper pervert to the
worst Sense: condemn our most innocent
Liberties, and debar us those Comforts
and Refreshments, which God hath for-
bidden to none, and our Condition ren-
ders as necessary to some of Us, as any
Others can pretend they are to Them;
and, which is worst of all, The Faults
and Failings of a very Few in a very nu-
merous Body, these *just good Men* charge
upon All, and involve the whole Order
in their Invectives, without any Remorse
or Distinction. And, Is it possible, you
will say, for any Man to secure himself
against Accusation, in the midst of such
profest Enemies, or treacherous pretended
Friends? Perhaps indeed absolutely to
secure ourselves it is not; but thus much
we may and are bound to do towards it:
To make the best Use of the Difficulties
such Men put upon us; *to cut off all* 2 Cor. xi
Occasion from them that desire Occasion, 12.
and, by some decent and modest Reserves

182 *A Sermon preach'd before*

S E R M. in our Conduct, to minister no Matter for
 V. such nice and delicate Judges of our Con-
 sciences to proceed upon. For there are
 many Things, which, though they do
 not bind us as private Persons, and con-
 sider'd purely between God and ourselves;
 yet as Members of a Christian Society,
 have a very just and strong Engagement
 upon us. The Honour of Religion is
 greatly concern'd in Matters in their own
 Nature Indifferent; and Innocence it
 self cannot preserve the Reputation of
 the Careless and Indiscreet. When there-
 fore St. *Paul* hath left us both Rule and
 Example, for that material Distinction of
Things Lawful, and *Things Expedient*;
 it will become us to transcribe it careful-
 ly in our Practice, by guarding our Con-
 versation so as to give no Offence, to
 to create no Jealousies, but abstain, if
 possible, from every Approach to, and
Appearance of, Evil. And This I take
 to be the utmost Importance of the Apo-
 stle's Expression here; that, by *providing*
Things honest in the Sight of all Men, and
 doing nothing which may misbecome our
 Character, sober and impartial Men may
 not

Cor. x.
13.

Rom. xii.
17.

the Sons of the Clergy. 183

not so much as accuse us at all; and for the Rest, if They will still be malicious and unreasonable, that *They, who speak Evil of Us as of Evil-doers*, may find the Shame and Confusion recoil upon themselves, *while they falsely accuse our good Conversation in Christ.*

3. THE other Qualification yet behind is, *Thirdly*, That the Children of the Clergy should not be *unruly*: Οὐκ ἀνπειράτοι, not of a stubborn and ungovernable Disposition, such as no Rule can hold, no Discipline can bend. The beating down this Spirit of Petulance and Pride is the Business of early Correction and Restraint; but the keeping it under will require our continual Care, when Ripeness of Years and Judgment hath set us above the Reproofs, and the Rod, of them who educated us. For, as of private Families the greater Societies are compounded, so Domestick Vices and Virtues are the Seeds and Pledges of the Civil. Here first the Mind is form'd; and, by the Impressions Men receive, and the Habits they contract within Doors, they grow up to be useful and orderly, or

S E R M. turbulent and factious, when they appear
 V. upon the Publick Stage. And if Religion be consider'd, as in truth it is, the best and strongest Band of Union and Good Government; it must be allow'd, that nothing better agrees with our Character, whose very Infancy was season'd with it, than that Gentleness and Treatable Temper, which disposes Men to Peace and Obedience, Submission to Laws, and Deference to Governors and Superiors of all sorts. This makes them humble and modest, respectful and in-offensive; contains them within their own Sphere, and checks that forward and busy, that querulous and controlling Spirit, which concerns it self with Matters too high for it. This secures Peace in the State, and Conformity in the Church; the Breach whereof is in Any of its Members Scandalous and Sinful, but in those of Our Education and Parentage, 'tis plainly monstrous and detestable.

If then, (to conclude at length this first Head,) If in the Days wherein we live, a perfect and general Goodness be rather to be wished, than with any probable Reason

the Sons of the Clergy. 185

Reason to be hoped for; let Us at least S E R M.
be careful, that We add as little as may V.
be to the Measure of the Common Iniquity. Let Heresies and Errors in Religion, Let Luxury and Dissoluteness of Life, Let Schism and Sedition, Refractoriness and Disorder, be banished from the Tribe of *Levi*, however; and Let Their Faith and Manners even speak their Pedigree, and distinguish them from the common Crowd, as eminently, as their Function did those venerable Ancestors, out of whose Loins they come. And This, I hope, is now, and always will be seriously endeavour'd, at least you will confess it ought to be so, when I shall have gone through my *Second Head*, wherein I propos'd,

II. To enforce the Apostle's Direction, here, by some such Motives, as are more especially proper for this Audience to be perswaded by.

I. THE *First* of These shall be The Advantage of Religion in general: Of which, as all sincere Professors are, so the *Sons of the Clergy*, who are so much nearer related

186 *A Sermon preach'd before*

S E R M. related to it, should in an especial manner be, exceeding jealous and tender.
 V. How greatly this is concern'd, how much advanc'd or depress'd by Good or Ill Example, hath been already hinted in the Beginning of this Discourse. And reason good there is, why it should be so; For, though Example be not properly a Rule of Living; yet is the Pattern set by Others a great Inducement to Virtue or Vice. When therefore Men so greedily catch at every Thing, that may countenance the gratifying their corrupt Inclinations; when they are so extremely industrious to argue themselves out of their Duty, and affect to distinguish their Abilities, by framing Cavils against the Christian Faith; What Zeal should this excite in Us, to oppose that Torrent of Irreligion? What Care to convince the World, that what we profess is no formal Pretence, no Stratagem to enslave Mankind, contriv'd or carry'd on by our designing Forefathers; but such as we are serious in, and well content to regulate all our Actions by? That, what in impious Scorn they call our *Trade*, was not taken

the Sons of the Clergy. 187

up merely to get a Livelihood; and, S E R M.
V.
when We and our Families had serv'd themselves of it, then, like other Callings, to be laid aside; but that, as our Pious Progenitors dedicated their Lives and Labours to God, by the Direction of his own Blessed Spirit, and chiefly in prospect of that glorious Recompence, which many of them now enjoy in Heaven; so We, in a just and constant Sense of those Impressions they have left upon us, esteem nothing so much our Concern, as the Continuance and Promotion of that Purity of Faith and Manners, by which the Gospel of Christ is vindicated and adorn'd. Nor need we suspect, that our Piety will prove ineffectual to these Purposes; for neither is Mankind so bad, so lost, nor Our Number and Condition so inconsiderable, but that the Exemplary Virtue even of this Society, may bring great Reputation to the Truth. And many, I doubt not, *wou'd glorify our Father in Heaven,* moved by the Brightness of *that Light shining before Men*, which the Orthodox Principles, and Good Works of such
a Holy

S E R M. a Holy Progeny might plentifully shed
 V. abroad in the World

AND, now I am upon this Topick of the Credit of Religion, suffer me, I beseech you, to recommend the Asserting that of the Protestant Cause, and our own National Church in particular. Let our Adversaries of *Rome* answer, if they can, the Tyranny they usurp over Consciences, in forbidding that to Some Orders of Men, which Christ hath left free to All. The Consequences of that imposed Celibacy have been too filthy to be mention'd, and too notorious to be deny'd. But let not Us furnish them with a more popular Argument, than any they have yet produc'd in this Point, by ministring just Ground of Reproach upon our marry'd Clergy, from the scandalous Lives of their Posterity. I do not deny, but there may be considerable Advantage in the single Life of Priests; But what our Saviour says, in a Case not very different, is certainly most applicable to This, *He that can*, and is disposed, *to receive it, let him receive it*: That is, It ought to be left free, a Matter of Choice

Mat. xix.
 12.

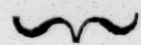
the Sons of the Clergy. 189

Choice and Convenience, and not made S E R M.
a Matter of Duty and Necessity. And it V.
will lie, I think, in Our Power, to shew,
that infinite Good may come from our
Deliverance out of this unreasonable
Bondage. For sure All, who consider
Religion, and wherein the Promotion of
it truly consists, cannot but allow, that
it is better serv'd by educating a Race of
Men pious and devout, sober, and tem-
perate, and exemplary in their Lives, ho-
nest and industrious in their Callings,
conscientious and useful in their several
Relations and Capacities, (All which,
humanly speaking, is a more probable Ef-
fect of a marry'd Clergy, than can be
expected from any other Condition of
Men;) Religion, I say, gets more by
this, than by any Addition of Gifts and
Revenues, with which the Clergy, ha-
ving no Families of their own to provide
for, can ever pretend to enrich the
Church.

2. A *Second* Inducement to the Vir-
tues prescribed in my Text, is a pious
and due Regard to the Reputation of Our
Parents: For it is not possible in this
Case.

S E R M.

V.

Prov. xxii.
6.

Case, that the Guilty should suffer alone; and the Apostle, by ordering, that Childrens Faults should obstruct the Father's Advancement in the Church, plainly implies, that a great Part of this Scandal must in reason devolve upon Him. *Solomon's Maxim, Train up a Child in the Way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,* no doubt is true in ordinary Cases. The first Impressions upon tender Minds enter so deep, that few ever out-grow them; but the Superstructure of a whole Life is usually of a Piece with the Foundations laid at the Beginning. If then the Sons of Clergymen shall turn aside to false and dangerous Doctrines, or grow careless of all Religion; If They shall let themselves loose to Vanity and Vice; If They shall be disobedient to Laws, disloyal to their Prince, or schismatical in the Church, the natural Interpretation of such Enormities will be, that due Care was not taken in seasoning them with good Principles betimes; that their Parents wanted, either Ability to settle them in the Truth, or Affection and Authority

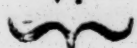
the Sons of the Clergy. 191

city to engage them in the early Prac-
tice and Love of Goodness, or by their
own Example encourag'd these Impie-
ties. Nor must we blame the World so
much as our Selves, for even such wrong-
ful Aspersions cast upon the Memory of our
Ancestors. For Men, in their Judgments
will proceed upon the general Course of
Causes and Effects; and that which is un-
true, may not always be unreasonable.
It is our Duty therefore to obviate the
very Suspicions of this kind, not to ex-
pose our Reverend Forefathers so much
as to Censure or Question, nor load them
with a Blame which is not Theirs. For
there are many Instances of this Injustice,
many Exceptions to the general Rule,
many Dispositions so intractable, that the
most exquisite Pains are lost upon them,
many so careless or so easily seduc'd, as
either not to retain, or not to regard the
best Instruction, and most prudent Dis-
cipline. And this I ought, in somewhat
more than mere Charity, to presume the
Case of Those, who miscarry, after li-
ving under the Education and Example
of Parents, consecrated to the more im-
mediate

S E R M.
V.
~

192 *A Sermon preach'd before*

S E R M.

V.


mediate Service of Almighty God. Sup-
 posing then such graceless Children to
 bear but cold, if any, Regard to the Ho-
 nour of Religion, the Church of which
 they are Members, or the Families whence
 they sprung ; I must try, if one other Con-
 sideration still in reserve, which comes
 up closer to them than the former, will
 quicken them up to their Duty ; and
 that is,

3. *Thirdly*, THE Sinfulness and Dan-
 ger of a vicious Life, and the very
 grievous Aggravation of Their Guilt in
 this Respect, above that of common Men.
 Considering the Difficulties of Virtue,
 the Number and Strength of Temptations
 with which every Condition of Life is
 closely beset, and the mighty, the fatal
 Byas of Human Nature towards Flesh
 and Sense ; it cannot seem strange, that
 they, who enter the Lists naked and un-
 arm'd, should become a cheap and easy
 Prey to their Spiritual Enemies. These
 Men, without any early Principles of
 Virtue, commit themselves to the World,
 like a Vessel turn'd a drift without Rud-
 der or Ballast, and nothing but a Mira-
 cle

the Sons of the Clergy. 193

ele can preserve them from being *car-* S E R M.
ried about with every Wind of Doc- V.
trine, born down by the impetuous
Tides of Lust and Passion, and splitting
upon the Rocks of Error, or Luxury,
or Faction. But when Men set out
warn'd and well fortified, rightly in-
structed what Course to take, where
their Danger lies, and how great it is;
nothing less than wretched Neglect, or
wretched Perverseness, can make Ship-
wreck of such Person's Faith and good
Conscience. For though, in the pre-
sent deprav'd State of Nature, the Ba-
lance do not hang directly even; yet when
our Propensity to Evil hath the Counter-
poise of Religious Education, the Ad-
vantage thence-forward inclines to the
Side of Virtue. In such Cases, The
Value of an Immortal Soul, The Awe
of a just and jealous God, One who sees
all our Actions, and will bring every
Secret Thing into Judgment; The Rea-
sonableness and real Satisfaction, The
present and the future Advantages of a
Holy Life; and the Easiness of conti-
nuing what from our Infancy and the
O very

SERM.

V.

very first Use of our Faculties we have been all along accustom'd to, are Preservatives of infinite Efficacy and Consequence. Vice, as well as Virtue, is confirm'd by Degrees ; and Habits of any kind cannot be contracted without much Time, and repeated Practice. A Man so tinctur'd beforehand, must take great Pains to be wicked, and offer mighty Violence to his Reason, before he can unlearn and unthink these Things again. Imagine then, what Condemnation we must draw upon Ourselves, by revolting from God, after such Privileges, for want of which the greater Part of Sinners are undone. For God will judge the World, not only according to Mens Actions, but according to the Advantages and Opportunities each Man had, or wanted, of doing well, or otherwise. And how happy a Difference hath his Providence put in this Respect, between Us and many Others ? They, many Times, are utter Strangers to God and the Truth ; but We have been bred up in a long and intimate Acquaintance with Both : They have frequently the first Impressions still

to

the Sons of the Clergy. 195

to make; We are only concern'd to see S E R M.
that Ours do not wear out: They have V.
the Difficulties of beginning late, must
bend Nature and Custom the contrary
Way, and strain hard against the Hill:
We have already gain'd the Rising-
Ground, need only to proceed smooth-
ly, and do as We, and our Fathers be-
fore us, have ever us'd to do. And, if
after all this, We start aside, or turn
back again; We are of all Mortals sure
the most abandon'd, and must expect
to be the most miserable. Beware there-
fore, my Brethren, lest that Reproach
of our Saviour, (in a Circumstance so
like This, that it needs no Application,)
be one Day the Language of God and
your own Consciences, against any of
You: *Woe unto thee Chorazin, Woe unto*
thee Bethsaida; for if the mighty Works
which have been done in You, had been
done in Tyre and Sidon, they wou'd have
repented long ago in Sackcloth and Asbes:
But I say unto you, It shall be more
tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the Day
of Judgment, than for You.

Mat. xi.
21, 22.

196 *A Sermon preach'd before*

SERM. THIS is indeed the Condemnation of
 V. all Deserters from Virtue and Religion;
 but to Us there is one Aggravation more,
 peculiar to Ourselves. For We are not
 only brought up at the Altar, but sus-
 tain'd by it. As therefore the Substance
 we expend upon Pious and Charitable
 Uses, is restoring to God his own; in
 some Respects more his own, than the
 Wealth of common Men: So the Mis-
 employment of our Possessions, our
 Parts, our Attainments, to the Disho-
 nour of Religion, is not a simple Abuse,
 but the most perfidious Sacrilege. I am
 not, nor is the World, insensible, how
 few of Our Fraternity have large Inhe-
 ritances derived from the Church's Re-
 venues to answer for. The Scarcity of
 these Instances is but too visible; and
 We are met this Day to supply in some
 measure, the sad and pressing Necessi-
 ties of Many, who feel and smart under
 the Calamity of a destitute Widowhood,
 and friendless Orphanage. But still my
 Argument is good for all those Advan-
 tages of Education, and the Opportuni-
 ties of raising our own Fortunes, which
 Our

the Sons of the Clergy. 197

Our Parents usually strain harder to give SERM.
Us, than any Other Men of equal Sub- V.
stance. The attending wholly to the
Work of the Ministry, the Hospitality
and Charity expected and exercised in
Preferments of better Condition, and
the too penurious Provision in Most, will
not leave much, even for these Purposes.
But be it much or little, still it was de-
voted to the Service of God before, and
as such received by our Ancestors. And
if this Society be, as I stedfastly be-
lieve it is, one of the signallest Exam-
ples in the World, of a particularly in-
dulgent Providence; if such a Number
of Men of any Race be no where to be
found, of whom so many live in Ho-
nour, and Eminence, and Wealth; or
at least in Credit and Comfort, in so ma-
ny several Professions, from so very
small Beginnings; these unusual Im-
provements, by the Blessing of God up-
on such Mens own Industry, is an En-
gagement equal to any other, for such
Lives, as may shew forth his Glory. And
this ought to render Our Virtue as much
above the ordinary Standard, as that Di-
vine

198 *A Sermon preach'd before*

SER M. vine Favour and Bounty is, which so
 V.  amply makes good to the Christian, what
 was spoke heretofore of the Jewish
Levi, that *the Lord would be his Por-
 tion*. And if it be not our Care, to
 proportion our Piety to our Blessings
 and Supports; the Account will be but
 the more enflamed at the last Day; and
 the Pious Donations and Endowments,
 design'd for the temporal Advantage of
 our Families, will then become an Ar-
 ticle against them to increase their Eter-
 nal Misery.

III. SUFFER me but a little longer,
 while in the *Third* and *Last* Place I ad-
 dress myself particularly to some of This
 our Body, and the more immediate Bu-
 siness of the Day. Which I shall do
 with all possible Brevity, and so con-
 clude.

1. And, *First*, To You the Worthy
 Stewards, and All, who shall at any
 Time assist in the Charitable Office of
 disposing our Orphans and poor Children
 to particular Callings in the World. You
 have heard, what sort of Persons all
 Children

the Sons of the Clergy. 199

Children of the Clergy ought to be ; S E R M.
and this I hope will prevail with You V.
so to place and settle them, as may never hazard the corrupting their good Beginnings ; much less the poisoning their Minds with wicked Principles, or engaging them in vicious Practices. In order hereunto, the Choice of Masters is of mighty Consequence ; Men, who make a Conscience of ordering and instructing their Families, as becomes Christians. For, if you commit these tender Plants to Men of Heretical or Erroneous Opinions, of careless or lewd Lives, of a Factious Schismatical and Ungovernable Spirit ; what can you expect, but that they should degenerate into the Vices of the Soil, and follow that Example which is back'd with Authority, till they become the direct contrary to that Description given in my Text ?

AGAIN. As to the Callings themselves, I take the Freedom to put you in Mind, of the Indecency, the Absurdity, the Danger, of obliging such Children to the Practice of those, whose

200 *A Sermon preach'd before*

SERM. Gains and Business lie in the Vanities
 V. or the Vices of Mankind. If none of
 this Progeny ought to be so much as *accused of Riot*; 'tis too hard a Temptation, to make Riot their very Support. A meaner or more laborious Calling, which ministers to the Necessities of Living, and is of general Use to Mankind, would much better employ their honest, though less gainful Industry; and more become Your Prudence, and Their Birth. Remember, You are the Guardians not of their Fortunes only, but their Virtue; and Persons of Your Extract and Education need not be told, that the securing That is the truest Charity, and that there can be no Charity without it. Give me leave therefore to exhort the fixing in your Minds upon these Occasions, that Admonition of our Saviour, *What shall it profit a Man, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?*

Mat. xvi.
 26.

2. NEXT, I beseech my Brethren of the Laity to consider, not only their own Personal Obligations to be such as my
 Text

the Sons of the Clergy. 201

Text directs, but the Duty of continuing S E R M.
V.
~
the same Virtues down to succeeding
Generations. For, if the Men of Titles
and worldly Pomp value themselves up-
on the Atchievements or Promotion of
Noble Ancestors, and are ambitious to
tread in Their Steps; Why should not
even the distant Posterity of Men, who
have minister'd to, and were highly be-
lov'd of, the King of Kings, retain an
Equal Esteem for the Memory, an E-
qual Concern for the Imitation, of their
Learned and Pious Progenitors? Think
not then, the Virtues I have been enfor-
cing to Us of the First Descent, to be the
Engagements of one single Age; but be
jealous for the lasting Honour of your
Families too, provided this be with a
holy Jealousy; and let it be remember'd
always, that the Particular Honour of
Our Race is Religion. This ought to be
look'd upon as Our distinguishing, Our
hereditary Character; and, like the En-
signs of other Honour, to be deliver'd
down to all Successions. A Character,
not depending upon Favour of Fortune,
to be maintain'd, but always ennobled
by

202 *A Sermon preach'd before*

SER M. by eminent Goodness in any Condition,
 V. and never debas'd, but by the vile Degeneracy of wicked Principles, and wicked Practices.

3. LASTLY, To Those, whose better Circumstances are capable of extending Relief to our Brethren in Affliction, I must beg leave to recommend, nay even to conjure them to a Bounteous Liberality. A Liberality suitable to the Distresses of them that want, and the Engagements of them from whom I ask it. These Engagements rise several ways; from the Consideration of Human Nature in general; from our being of the Household of Faith, and fellow-feeling Members of Christ's Mystical Body; from that yet nearer Spiritual Kindred, contracted by our mutual Relation to the Priesthood in particular; from the Necessities to be supplied, so great, as justly to reproach our unnatural Hard-heartedness, so innocent and unavoidable, as not to be charg'd upon Vanity and Vice, but purely the Work of Providence upon the needy Sufferers; from the Wisdom and Goodness of that Providence, which
 by

by putting such a Difference between the S E R M.
Fortunes of Men of like Descent, hath, V.
by the Adversity of Some, furnish'd more
abundant Occasion for exercising the Vir-
tue of Others; from the Reasonableness
of thanking God for his Blessings, by
enlarging Our Bowels, and opening Our
Hands wider, where His hath dealt them
more sparingly. But These, and what-
ever other Motives else, (and many Mo-
tives more there are,) proper to excite our
Charity, have been so often, so justly, so
piously, so successfully represented upon
this Occasion heretofore, that I dare not
so much as suppose it needful now to in-
sist upon them. And indeed this very
Appearance proves it not to be needful;
for All You who come hither know, that
Our Solemnities are not design'd for Lu-
xury or Pomp, but purely to maintain a
holy Friendship, to promote Good Works,
to succour those whom Want and Shame
will not suffer to come, and to attain
that Greater Blessedness of Giving than
Receiving. All therefore that I urge at
present is, that a Just Proportion may be
observ'd in our Giving, and that some
parti-

204 *A Sermon preach'd before*

S E R M. particular Circumstances may be con-
 sider'd, which at this Time seem to re-
 quire a more than common Compassion.
 The expensive Burden of a Long War, in which the Clergy and their Families have had a particular Share, calls for larger Supplies. The Blessing of Peace, in which the Safety of our Church and Religion is especially concern'd, makes it reasonable to express our Thanks, by the abundant Measure of those Sacrifices, with which God is well-pleas'd. Nay, I cannot forbear to add, that the very Place where we are now assembled, is an additional Argument to the same Purpose. For what true Son of this establish'd Church can, without a sensible Joy, see the Beauty of this Cathedral, and the Decencies of its Worship restor'd, after so many Years being buried in Ruins? And how can that Joy better exert itself, than by contributing chearfully to the Support of those living Temples of the Holy Ghost, for whom I stand here an Advocate? Thus shall we incline God to continue, to multiply, to sanctify his Mercies to our Religion and Nation, to
 our

the Sons of the Clergy. 205

our Persons and Posterity, when every S E R M.
Benefit we receive is made a fresh Incen- V.
tive of our Zeal, for promoting His Ho-
nour, and the Good of our Brethren.

AND may this be the constant mutual
Effect of all God's Loving Kindness, and
all our Gratitude for it; that his Bless-
ings may produce becoming Improve-
ments in Holiness, and Increase of Good
Works; and those Improvements may en-
sure a perpetual Succession of more and
greater Blessings. Particularly, may
this pure Establish'd Church, so often
mark'd out for a Sacrifice, for ever stand
and flourish the Impregnable Bulwark
of the Reformed Religion, and the Joy
and Praise of the whole Earth: May
there never want an able, orthodox, and
pious Clergy, to defend her Doctrines
with their Learning, and adorn them
with their Lives; and may there ever
flow from Them a Holy and Righteous
Posterity, sound and steadfast in the Faith,
unblameable in their Conversations, orderly
and useful in their respective Capacities,
zealous and rich in Good Works; In whose
Actions the Instructions and Examples of
their

206 *A Sermon preach'd, &c.*

S E R M. their Fathers may live and shine, and force
V. even a crooked and perverse Generation
to confess, that God is in them of a Truth.
And This is what not We only of This
Society are more immediately concern'd
to pray and to endeavour alway; but a
Petition of general Importance to Reli-
gion, to which All Ours, who love the
Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity and
Truth, will say, *Amen.*



S E R M O N



SERMON VI.

T H E

Happinefs of Good Men
after D E A T H.

Preach'd at the

F U N E R A L

O F

Mr. *Robert Castell,*

AUGUST 19. 1698.



R E V. xiv. 13.

*I heard a Voice from Heaven, saying unto
me, Write; Blessed are the Dead
which die in the Lord from henceforth.
Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may
rest from their Labours, and their
Works do follow them.*

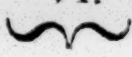


H A T the Importance of
these Words is very great,
we need no other Argument
to convince us, than the so-
lemn Manner, in which they are delivered
to

SERM. to the Apostle. Such is the express
 VI. Command, that they should be carefully
 preserved by Writing, *I heard a Voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write; Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord from henceforth.* To which is added yet farther the Testimony of the Holy Ghost, confirming the Truth of what that Voice had dictated, and declaring particularly, wherein the Blessedness of such Persons consists, *Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.* These Forms are such Preparations, as always speak the Matter ushered in by them to be of mighty Consequence, And are intended to awaken our Minds more powerfully, and to recommend it to our best and most attentive Consideration.

THE immediate Occasion and Design of the Passage now before us, was plainly to fortify the Christians against some very violent Persecutions, which St. *John* had a certain Foresight given him of, and describes accordingly by very terrible Circumstances. Inasmuch, that he pronounces it here a very great Happiness, to
 be

Good Men after Death. 209

be taken out of the World, before those SERM.
Calamitous and Trying Times should VI.
come, which might endanger the shaking 
the most resolute Faith and Patience, even
of the Best Men. Or (as some other
Interpreters think) he describes the Bless-
edness of those faithful Professors of
Christianity, whom the Grace of God
should enable to persevere unto the End,
and to suffer Martyrdom for the Doctrines
of his Gospel. Those Persons being
sometimes said, with a peculiar Empha-
sis, to *die in the Lord*, who suffer in His
Cause, and lay down their Lives for His
sake.

BUT there is no Necessity, nor indeed
any sufficient Reason, for confining this
Expression to those Times of Primitive
Persecution only, or to the Martyrs who
suffered in them. For, as every sincere
good Man, who heartily embraces the
Faith of Christ, and whose Conversation
is such as becomes that Faith, is said in
Scripture to *live unto the Lord*; so every 2 Cor. v.
17
one, who continues in that Belief and O-
bedience to the End of his Days, is very
truly and properly said, when God takes
p him

S E R M. him out of the World, to *sleep in Jesus,*
 VI. and *to die in the Lord.*

1 Thes. iv.
 74.

AND thus, it is manifest, not our Own only, but the Christian Church in general, hath constantly understood the Text, by making it, in many antient Liturgies, a Part of the Burial Service: And so declaring the Blessedness here, to belong to every deceased Person, who lives and dies a worthy Member of her Communion.

HAVING therefore so good Authority to bear me out, I shall make no Difficulty to treat of my Text, in this larger and more popular Sense; and so to apply it to the Occasion of our present Meeting, that we may gather from hence those useful and comfortable Reflections, which may minister to us a Reasonable Hope of *our Departed Brother's* Happiness, and a joyful Expectation of *our Own*.

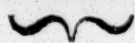
IN order hereunto, I shall, so far as the Time will give me leave, do these Three Things:

I *First*, I shall endeavour to represent to you the Happy State of Good Men

Good Men after Death.

211

Men after Death, as the Words have S E R M.
here described it to us. VI.



II. *Secondly*, I shall, from this Doctrine so established, draw some few Inferences, which may be of use to us, both for the Conduct of our Lives in general, and more particularly seasonable upon these Melancholy Occasions.

III. AND then, in the *Third* and *last* Place, I shall apply the Substance of my Two former Heads yet more closely, to the Circumstances of the Person, whose mortal Part now lies before us.

I. *First*, I shall endeavour to represent to you the happy State of Good Men after Death, as the Words have here described it to us. And I may well say I shall *endeavour* only, a Thing which it is not possible for me worthily to effect. For Who indeed can represent it justly? What Tongue of Men or Angels can find Expressions strong and significant enough?

S E R M.
VI.

nough? What Images are so bright, so glorious, What finite Understandings of a Capacity so large, that they should contain adequate Ideas of that Bliss, to which nothing we are acquainted with in this Life is equal, nothing like, nothing in any Degree comparable? That Bliss, which would lose a great Part of its Perfection, if Sense and feeble Reason could fully comprehend it; and whose peculiar Excellence it is, that *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive, the Things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* The utmost therefore which you must expect in this Case, is only to have it drawn in little; In such Proportions as frail Men are capable of; by Resemblances taken from Things familiar to us; by setting it in Opposition to the Miseries we are at present exposed to; and by such Other Considerations, as are of Value and Weight with us, in the Affairs and Transactions of human Life. This is the Method, which the Holy Spirit hath made use of here: And the main Arguments, by which

Good Men after Death.

213

which he raises our Esteem of that Blessedness, pronounced from Heaven *upon the Dead which die in the Lord*, seem to be these Three.

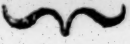
S E R M.
VI.


1. *First*, THE Troubles such Men are delivered from. *They rest from their Labours.*

2. *Secondly*, THE good Acceptance and great Reward, which they shall after Death receive, for what they have done well during the present Life. *Their Works do follow them.*

3. *Thirdly*. THE Time when they enter upon this Happiness, intimated in that Term fixed here, *Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord from henceforth.*

1. *First*, THEY who die in the Lord are *Blessed*, in regard of the Troubles they are delivered from, *They rest from their Labours.* I will not, I need not, upon this Occasion undertake to shew, how sore and manifold these Labours are. For This is an Argument, which comes home to the Sense and Experience of every one of us. All that hear me

SERM. are able to go before me in the Reflection,
 VI.  how thick we are beset with Troubles and Afflictions on every Side, in our Bodies and our Souls, in our publick and our private Capacities. The Vanities of Youth, and the Infirmities of Age: The Difficulties of supporting these Bodies, and the perpetual Wants and Weaknesses to which they are subject; The lingering and the acute Distempers; the sensible Decays, and the more sensible Pains, that waste, and tear, and torment them. The Miseries of an unhappy Temper, and Overflowings of a black heavy Blood, which intercept all light and comfort, and condemn the Soul to the dark dismal Prison of a melancholy Constitution; The Violence of Passions from within, and the vast Variety of Accidents from without, which are continually provoking us to Grief, or Anger, or some other disorderly Excesses: These are Personal, and of a Piece with us.

THE Losses in our Estates, the surprising Disappointments in our Expectations and Designs, the Hurry of Business, the Strife and Contention our Affairs engage

gage us in; The Travel of the Poor, SERM.
and the Cares of the Rich; the Anguish VI
of our Afflicted, and the Uncertainty of
our most Prosperous Condition; the
Treachery of pretending Friends, and
the Spight of profess'd Enemies; the
Snarcs of Conversation; the Vanity and
extreme Danger even of those Diversions
and Pleasures, by which we labour to
lighten this Load of Life, and gain some
Intervals of Ease at least, by forgetting
for a little while our Cares and Calamities.
These, and a thousand Difficulties more,
are inseparable Incumbrances on Mortal-
lity, to every one, considered singly and
apart from his Relations and Engagements
in Society.

BUT as those Capacities increase, our
Sorrows and Labours increase with them.
The Care of Families, and kind Concern
for those whom Nature has made a Part
of our selves; The Fears and anxious
Thoughts for their Safety, the Fellow-
feeling of their Sufferings; The restless
Endeavours to help them in their Distres-
ses, and the cutting Regret we endure,
when we would assist them, but cannot,

S E R M.

VI.

Or when they will not suffer us to do them the Good we could; And (to name no more, that Calamity which all of you at this Time are very deeply affected with,) the having those Friends taken from us, whom Nature, or Kindness, or their own Worth, have render'd very dear and necessary. The tearing, as it were, our very Hearts asunder, by cutting off that tenderest Part of them, whom God and Affection had incorporated and made one with us; These are Tryals, which we have so quick and piercing a Sense of, that it is much less difficult to lament and complain as they deserve, than to temper our Repentments, and keep them within the Bounds of Duty, and Decency, and Christian Moderation.

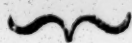
It were easy to give you a yet more moving Spectacle, by opening the Prospect a little wider; and urging the Uneasiness we feel from the Distresses of the Needy, the Injuries of the Oppressed, the Cries of Helpless Widows and Orphans, the Corruptions, or the Calamitous Circumstances, of the State, or the Church, whereof we are Members; All which

which affect us more sensibly, in proportion as we are better natured Men, that is, better Christians. But That, which is to such the most afflicting Consideration of all is, that all these Things do not only create a present Uneasiness, but may likewise, if not very carefully managed, lay the Foundation of Eternal Misery. That they are the Temptations and Instruments of Sin, such as the Frailty of human Nature is but too apt, alas! to be overborn by; Such as are often successful even against the most Watchful and Resolute; And therefore, of all other Labours in this Fight of Afflictions, the Wise and Good Man esteems those the heaviest, which hazard the Salvation of his Soul; And no Consideration renders a Deliverance from the Sufferings of Life half so desirable, as that mentioned by *St. Paul*, that *He that is dead is freed* Rom. vi. 7.
from Sin.

THESE are all of them such Labours, as the Condition we now live in naturally exposes every Man to; And the very Severest of them such, as the Providence of God hath not thought fit to exempt
the

S E R M.

VI



SER M. the holiest and best-beloved of his Ser-
 VI. vants from. They, like their Captain,
 are made perfect through Hardships and
 Sufferings. These are their *Spiritual Warfare*, the Exercises of their Virtue,
 the Proofs of their Patience, and Fidelity,
 and constant Love to Him. And
 God is not much concerned to be very
 exact in the Measures of Good and Evil
 in this Life; because this Life is not the
 Season of final Retribution: But he hath
 appointed another, wherein he knows
 how to make Good Men ample amends,
 for all they do and suffer for him here.
 The Benefits we are to expect at present,
 are the Wisdom and Kindness of his Pro-
 vidence to turn every Affliction to our
 Good, the powerful Assistances of his
 Grace to support us under our Conflicts,
 and the merciful Execution of that De-
 cree, which, *after we have toiled and
 suffered a while*, may translate us to a
 State of Rest and Peace; may render that
 Death, which to mere Nature is so ghastly
 and formidable, a Blessing and Privilege,
 and such in truth it is, in the Eye of Faith,
 and to those *who die in the Lord*.

Good Men after Death.

219

SERM.

VI.



FOR, ought not this to be a very Supporting Consideration, in the midst of Difficulties and Troubles, that, though these hem us round, and thrust fore at us now, yet there is a Day coming, in which we shall make our Escape from them all? That God will hide us in the Grave, and set us on that Shore, where we shall, full of Security, look back upon this tempestuous World, and have no Part of the Storms that tost us here, but only the Remembrance of them, left? A Remembrance, so much more joyful, as the Miseries we call to mind were formerly more grievous: But especially, Is it not a mighty Comfort, to think we shall shortly put off this Load of Infirmities? that we shall be perfectly at quiet from all the Disturbance, which the Lustings of the Flesh against the Spirit, and the irreconcilable War in our Members create us every Day and Hour? that God will not only cover our Head in the Battel, but take us out of the Field, into a sure Retreat, where the Enemy of Souls cannot hurt us, nor Temptation assault us, nor corrupt Nature betray us, nor Pain, or

Af-

SER M. Affliction, or Danger overtake us? Surely

VI.

Job v. 7.

Man that is born to Trouble, as the Sparks fly upwards, hath Reason to be pleased with such a Refuge as This; Surely That ought to be no small Recommendation of the future State of Good Christians, which the Voice from Heaven gives, in the Twenty first of this Book, at the fourth Verse, that God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying; neither shall there be any more Pain: for the former Things are passed away. So valuable a Blessing it is, merely to rest from their Labours; so proper this Argument to reconcile us to Death, that it removes us into a Place of Ease and Safety. But if This make Death tolerable, there is something behind, which makes it even desirable. The Prospect of a Deliverance may sustain us under our Troubles, but it is enough to prevail with us, not only to bear, but even to bless our Troubles, when we reflect, that though our Sufferings are left behind, yet the Virtue and Effect of them are not so. For that is the *Second Reason,*

2. WHERE

Good Men after Death. 221

2. WHEREFORE *the Dead are blessed*, S E R M. VI.
who die in the Lord, that they do not
only *rest from their Labours*, but *their*
Works follow them. The Toil and
Drudgery is at an End, and all that could
be grievous to them is put off with that
Body, which exposed them to Corruption
and Suffering: But those Labours are
not forgotten; Their Diligence and Con-
scientious Care, The Meekness and Re-
signation wherewith they were endured,
stick by the Labourer still; And, as to
all the desirable and advantageous Pur-
poses, will be sure to keep him company
for ever in the other World. For, by
this Expression of *their Works following*
them, is meant that Good Acceptance
and great Reward, which the Saints shall
be sure to find after Death, for what they
have done well during this present Life.

WE must not from This, or from any
Other Expressions like it in Scripture,
infer such Merit and Sufficiency in the
best Works of the best Men, as can con-
vey to them a Right to demand this
Happiness, as in Rigour and Equity their
due. For *All have come short of the* Rom. iii.
Glory 23

SER M. *Glory of God, and no Flesh can be justi-*

VI. *fied in his Sight, should Judgment, and*
 Psal. cxliii. *not Mercy, be the Standard of his Pro-*

2. *ceedings. But hereby is meant, that, according to the Terms of the Gospel-Covenant, which, for the Sake and Sufferings of Christ, promiseth Pardon for Sins repented of, Compassion for Infirmities not indulged, and a Recompence for those Good Actions which the Grace of God hath wrought in, and by, and with us, Every sincere Christian shall not fail to be abundantly considered, for, and in proportion to, what he hath performed and endured, as became him, in the Days of his Flesh. I say, abundantly considered; More or less, as the Tryals and Instances of each Man's Virtue have been more or less; but yet in such Manner and Measure, as far exceeds the Value of his best Works, and the Degree of his sharpest Afflictions. For St. Paul hath assured us, That the Sufferings of this present Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us; and that these light Afflictions which are but for a Moment,*

Rom. viii.
18.

2 Cor. iv.
16.

Good Men after Death. 223

ment, work out for us a more exceeding S E R M.
and eternal Weight of Glory. In short, VI.
God will deal with such Men, according
to the Riches of his own infinite Mercy;
and make them actually happy then, far
above what they now are able to much
as to conceive.

F O R, how indeed can it be supposed,
that We, in this imperfect State of Things,
should have any distinct Notions of that
future, and vastly different State, when
this Dross of Earth and sensual Appe-
tites, shall be purified; when the Facul-
ties of our Mind shall be enlarged; freed
from Prejudice and Error, and not see as
now, *darkly and through a Glass*, but 1 Cor. xiii.
know even as also we are known. When 12.
we raise our Souls as high as possibly we
can, yet even then our Thoughts are
cloudy and confused. *We speak as Chil-*
dren, we think as Children, we under-
stand as Children; but when we come
to the *Fulness of the Stature of perfect*
Men in Christ Jesus, these childish Things
shall be put away, and we shall have
quite other Apprehensions of the Mat-
ter. Then shall we see, and know, and
feel.

SERM.

VI.

feel, that all those lofty Descriptions of Heavenly Joys in Scripture, which now so hardly gain our Belief, are much beneath the Dignity of that Happiness they would represent and recommend to us; And, that those Images were made use of, not because they were worthy and proportionable, but because they were the fittest and best Resemblances of that Bliss which We were capable of. And therefore even in these noblest Flights, there is all along a Condescension to our Weaknesses; A Veil of Figures and sensible Similitudes drawn before that Glory, which is too strong and bright for our naked Eye, too big for even Thoughts and Wishes, much more for Words, to reach and come up to.

O! the incomprehensible Excellence of that Knowledge, which shall see God as he is, and liken the Soul to the Excellence it sees! O the Delights of that Wonder and Praise, and perpetual Thanksgiving, with which glorified Saints extol the amazing Wisdom, and Justice, and Goodness of God! The mighty Satisfaction of being let into the hidden Treasures

Good Men after Death. 225

S E R M^o

VI.

tures of his Mercy, the exact Harmony of his Providence, the Myſteries of his Nature, and his Dealings with Mankind, which now pretending Mortals wrangle and raiſe ſuch a Duſt about ! O the perfect Purity and Tranquility, of a Life free from Luſt and Paſſion, from doubtful and painful Struggles, and ever chooſing, ever delighting in that which is good ! O the Charms of that entire Love, and Peace, and joint Conſent, in honouring and ſerving God, and rejoicing in each others Happineſs ; void of that Envy and Grudging, that Jealouſy and Diſcord, that Ill-nature or Selfiſhneſs, thoſe Perſonal Injuries, or Differences in Interests and Opinions, which will not ſuffer us to enjoy a perfect Unity in this World ! O Gracious God, *how plentiful is thy Goodneſs, which thou haſt laid up for Them that fear thee !* They pay thee a ſhort imperfect Obedience ; and, What is this, that the King of Heaven ſhould recompence it with ſo great a Reward ! They are *unprofitable Servants*, and yet thou makeſt them ſit down at thy Table in thy Kingdom ! Their Sins and Frail-

Q

ties

SER M. ties are Many, and *Those* are remember'd
 VI. no more; their Good Deeds in Compari-
 son but very few, and yet not one of
Theſe is forgotten! Their preſent La-
 bours and Sufferings have their Intervals
 and Comforts, and are but light and ſhort
 at worſt; light in Conſideration of that
 future Weight of Glory; ſhort, and even
 as nothing, to that Eternity of Blifs, that
 pure uninterrupted Blifs, which they
 work out for them. Nor doſt thou, Bleſ-
 ſed Jeſus, put off theſe Labourers with
 diſtant Proſpects and uneaſy Expectati-
 ons: For no ſooner does that Night come
 on, in which they can work no longer,
 but they are called to preſent Payment.
 The Combat once ended, and the Race
 run, the Conqueror is crown'd without
 Delay. Which brings me to the *Third*
 Circumſtance, whereby this Spirit here
 repreſents to us the Bleſſedneſs of Good
 Men departed; and that is,

3. THE Time when they enter upon
 their Happineſs, intimated in that Term
 fixed in thoſe Words. *Bleſſed are the*
Dead which die in the Lord from hence-
forth. I am not ignorant, what differing
 Inter-

Good Men after Death. 227

Interpretations are put upon this Word SERM.
VI.
 in the Original; but neither the Time, nor the present Temper of your Minds, will bear so cold a Thing as Criticising now. And therefore it shall suffice to say, that both the Sense in which I have all along taken the Words, and the Church in using them at the Burial of every Christian, do warrant us to conclude, that this Rest from Labour, and the Reward of Good Works, begin at the Instant of *Mens dying in the Lord*. And, if the Passage before us do not sufficiently prove this, yet there are Others, which may even oblige us to understand it so. The Labourers in the Vineyard, as soon as ever the Even was come, and the Duty of Matt. xx
8 the Day over, are called to receive their Wages. *Lazarus* immediately upon his Death, is said *to be carried by Angels in- Luke xvi.
22, 25.* to *Abraham's Bosom*, and comforted for *the Evil Things he received in his Life-time*. St. Paul, upon mentioning his Departure at hand, and reflecting upon the good Fight he had fought, declares, 2 Tim. iv
6, 7, 8. that from *thenceforth there was laid up for him a Crown of Righteousness*. Most

SERM.

VI.

probably indeed this Crown is not yet so bright, nor *Lazarus* his Happiness so exquisite, as it will be at the last great Day of Account; But still that Crown was determined and fixed from the Day of this Apostle's Departure, though he is to be more solemnly invested with it, at the Day when the Righteous Judge shall appear. And *Lazarus* was at least in a Condition of *Comfort*, such as made him good Amends for the Poverty and Diseases he had undergone in his Body. So that these Passages, if not That also of the Labourers in the Vineyard, may serve to confute that fond Imagination, which some have entertained, of the Soul sleeping in a State of Insensibility till the general Resurrection; They also overthrow that profitable Delusion of the Romish Purgatory, and render Prayers for the Dead there, superfluous and useless. For how can They be *comforted* who have no Sense? What Need have Those Dead for our Prayers, whom my Text pronounces *from thenceforth Blessed*? or how can They be said to *rest from their Labours*, who pass from hence into a Condition of Torments, more exquisite by far than this Life

Good Men after Death. 229

Life can possibly endure? and yet such S E R M.
the Popish Purgatory is represented. So VI.
just Ground have we to conclude, that
there is no Interval, between the End of
Good Mens Labour, and the Beginning
of their Rest; So substantial a Reason is
it of their Happiness, that their Works
do not only follow them at a Distance,
but keep them Company, go with them
hand in hand, and render the Dead *bles-*
sed, from the very Moment of *their ay-*
ing in the Lord.

II. I HAVE now done with my *First*
general Head, and, after so largely insist-
ing upon it, shall think it necessary to
say less upon my *Second*, which consists
of such Inferences, as are proper to be
drawn from the foregoing Particulars.
And they (among many Others) may
be These that follow.

I. As *First*, We shall do well seri-
ously to consider, what vast Encourage-
ment these Words contain to a Godly
Life. For it must always be remembered,
that the Glorious Privileges we have hi-
therto been treating of, do not belong to

S E R M. all indifferently, but only to such as *die*
 VI *in the Lord.* That is, (as was declared
 in the Beginning of this Discourse) To
 Them, that embrace the Faith of Jesus,
 that live up to the Principles of the Gospel,
 and persevere in doing so to the End of
 their Days. As for Those, who either
 refuse and oppose this Belief, or who
hold it in Unrighteousness, their Case is
 the very Reverse of what we have been
 describing. They are so far from finding
 Rest after their Labours, that all the E-
 vils they sustain in this World, are light
 and gentle, and less than nothing, in com-
 parison of the intolerable, the uncon-
 ceivable, the infinitely heavier Miseries,
 reserved for them in another. Their
Works follow them too; but it is to up-
 braid them with their Guilt and Impeni-
 tence, to wound them with sad and fruit-
 less Remorse, to testify against them in
 the Great Day of Account, and to con-
 demn them to everlasting Flames. Let
 me then most earnestly conjure, let me
 prevail with, All that hear me to Day, to
 secure a Title to this Blessedness, by break-
 ing off their Iniquities from this very Mo-
 ment.

Good Men after Death. 231

ment. And this will best be done, by S E R M.
possessing their Minds with just and wor- VI.
thy Notions of these Comforts in my

Text; by considering what vast Amends will be made them for all the Hardships of Virtue here; and how wretched an Exchange those Men will make at last, who indulge the Pleasures of Sin for a Season, at the prodigious Expence, the certain and irrecoverable Loss, of their Souls and Eternal Happiness hereafter. The Severest Doctrines of the Gospel have more than enough to enforce their Practice upon us, if we would but consider them impartially, and proceed upon the same Measures, which human Prudence puts us upon in the Affairs of this World; And what are the Affairs of this World, when put into the Balance against our Spiritual Concerns? What are the troubled and imperfect Joys of Sense, which a thousand Cares and Fears, Pains and Disasters innumerable disturb, in comparison of that sweet and sure Repose above, which nothing can annoy? What are the Honours, the Wealth, the

Q 4 Pomp

SERM.

VI.

Pomp we so eagerly pursue here, if set against the Glories of Saints, and the inestimable Treasures of our heavenly Father's Kingdom? Trust me, such Gains are no where to be had, so cheaply to be bought, so certain to be obtained, so durable in the Enjoyment. No Gains indeed are durable but these; Nothing turns to true Account, but Piety and Virtue. And This is profitable for all Things; so exceeding profitable, that we could not have hoped, we could not have imagined it; and if any other than God the Giver had told us of this, we could not have been so easy as to believe, so presumptuous as to expect it.

2. *Secondly*, THE Considerations, which went before, are very proper to arm our Minds against the Fear of Death. A Passion, where it prevails to any great Degree, of all Others the most Tyrannical and Tormenting. It must be so; because Scaring us perpetually with hideous Apprehensions of a Danger, which, we are fully satisfied beforehand, it is not possible with all

OUR

Good Men after Death. 233

our Industry to shun. And this domineering Evil is what nothing but Christianity ever was, or could be, a Match for. But when we consider, how many Things there are, which may justly abate our Fondness for This Life, and that they who *die in the Lord* are effectually delivered from all these: When we look upon Death as a necessary Passage to Happiness; and reflect, that the Instant we cease to be miserable here, we take Possession of a never-failing Bliss in another State; This puts quite another Face upon the Matter, from what it carries to the Wicked, or to the Natural Man. *The Sting of Death is Sin*, says the Apostle, that is, the only Thing which can in reason render Dying terrible, is the being called to an Account for our evil Deeds. But the Gospel frees us from the Bondage of this Fear too. It shews us a Victorious Redeemer; One, who hath made Satisfaction for the Sins of Mankind, and by so doing hath triumphed over Death; nay, he hath perfectly changed the Nature of the Thing, and made it a Blessing

S E R M.

VI.

1 Cor. xv.
56.

SERMON. Blessing to them that *die in Him*. And

VI. This is what we may all do, by the Assistance of his Grace, which is wanting to none, who seek and use it diligently. So that, upon the whole Matter, this Fear is an Affliction, in our Power to correct and moderate at least. We may conquer it as Christians, though we cannot wholly remove it, as Men; For, the better we are provided for the Approach of Death, the less troublesome all Apprehensions of it will be to us. And a firm Prospect of our future Blessedness would bring us, so far as is consistent with our Duty, even to thirst and pant, and long for that very Dissolution, which now we start and tremble at, and take such infinite Pains to run away from.

3. *Thirdly*, FROM hence we may fetch the most, in truth the only, powerful Argument, to support us under any Injuries or Afflictions, that befall us in this present World. To think, that These Things cannot last long, is some, but far from a sufficient, Consolation. But
to

to be assured, that they will turn to our S E R M.
Advantage, an incomparably greater Ad- VI.
vantage, such as bears no Proportion at
all to the utmost we can ever endure;
this is a substantial Stay to our Spirits.
To reflect, that He, who afflicts us in
the mean while, does it for our Good,
and out of fatherly Tenderness; that
what we complain of is the Exercise of
our Virtue, and every Fresh Tryal a
higher Step to Perfection; that not One
Sigh or Groan vanishes into Air, but
reaches the Ears of the Almighty; not
One Tear falls to the Ground, but all
are *put into his Bottle*, (as *David* ex- Psal. lvi. 9.
presses it;) not One Injury or Affront
we ever forgave, but it hath contributed
to the Forgiveness of our infinitely more
heinous Offences against God; not One
Pang or Sickness we have gone through
patiently, and with a Christian Resigna-
tion, but it will be paid us back with
Interest in perfect Joy: These are the
invincible Weapons of a good Man,
such as harden, and render him Proof,
against all the Assaults of Ill Men, and
what

S E R M. what we call Ill Fortune. And he, who
 VI. is careful to have this Armour girt close
 about him, will find his Courage keep
 up with his Faith, and be able to *with-*
stand in the Evil Day, and having done
all to Stand.

Fourthly and Lastly, What hath been
 now said may and ought to prevent, or
 at least to check, those Sallies of exces-
 sive Grief, which we are too often dis-
 posed to give a Loose to, when it pleases
 God to remove Good Men, and espe-
 cially our Friends and Relations, out of
 the World. For do the Men, who in-
 dulse such Passions, consider at all what
 they say or do, when they profess this
 Concern for such Persons? For Them?
 Why are we sorry for Them? Is it such
 an insupportable Calamity to us, that
 they, whom we loved most dearly, have,
 after many painful Struggles, broke loose
 at last from Misfortunes and Diseases,
 from Hazards and Dangers, from Sor-
 row and Sin? Do we use to weep and
 lament, when our best Friends escape
 many a terrible Storm, and come Safe
 into

into Port ; especially too, if the Returns S E R M.
of their Voyage have been prosperous VI.
beyond all Imagination? Yet this (*my*
Brethren) is directly the Case of our
Friends, who are *dead in the Lord*. And
can we suppose, that the being sorry for
Their Happiness is an Argument of Our
Love? This is most absurd. And is it not
as plain, that our refusing to be comforted
in such Cases, proceeds from Want of con-
sidering how happy They really are ; or
else, that it is not Kindness for Them,
but for Ourselves? And yet if it be for
Ourselves ; Do we not think it a neces-
sary Proof of Affection, to be pleased
with the very great Advantage of a par-
ticular Friend, though We suffer some
little Uneasiness or Inconvenience by it?
And shall we not be content, that an Useful
Neighbour, a Darling Child, or a tender
Husband, should be blessed above what
we can frame any Idea of to Ourselves,
though we must not enjoy his Company
here any longer? But a good Man, you'll
say, can least of all be spared ; True.
When we speak and think as Men ; but,
if we argue as Christians, It is as true,
that

S E R M.

VI.

that such a one we may best bear to part with. Because the better the Man is, the more assured Hope we have of his obtaining that better Life; which is the most Effectual Argument to soften these Tryals of our Resignation to us.

AND therefore I cannot but think it very well becomes me to exhort You the Relations of this deceased, that You would dry up your Tears: And, from the dark Side of this afflicting Providence to your selves, turn your Thoughts rather to the bright Prospect of His happy Change. For such, I make no doubt, we shall think it, if to my two former Heads, be added that very Little, which I have still to speak upon my *Third* and Last, wherein I promised to apply my Self to the Circumstances of this Person, upon whose Account we are now met, and whose Remains of Mortality lie here before us.

III. When I say I will add but little, you will not so understand me, as if the Subject would not bear a great deal.

BUT

But Much is not necessary, when I S E R M.
speak to Them, who have had the Hap- VI.
piness of a longer Acquaintance than
my self; and therefore All I have to do,
is only to refresh your Memories, with
some of those remarkably good Qualities
and Actions, which I have received from
Persons of undoubted Authority, and
such as yourselves will bear Testimony
to, upon the Mention of them. And
here I shall follow the Method of my
Text.

First then. It could not be, but a
Person of his Engagements in the World
must have a Share of Labours and Trou-
bles, Losses and Disappointments: All
which were entertained with great Mo-
deration, and just Reflections upon that
Providence of God, which disposes of
Us and Ours as he sees fit. But be-
sides these Tryals, it pleased God, in
his later Years, to afflict him with sore
Pains and frequent Distempers. All
which he bore with such Evenness of
Mind, that even the Rackings of the
Gout and Stone could not often provoke
him

SER M. him to Any, and never to such as were
 VI. Unbecoming, Complaints. God exercised
 that Patience, we may hope, to increase
 the Reward of it; and to render it exemplary among those who observed and conversed with it. And that Meekness and Submission, which continued to his very last Hours, notwithstanding the most acute Pangs, of one of the most insupportable Diseases Mankind are subject to, give us just Ground of Confidence, that he is now at rest from his Labours, and that *it is good for him to have been so afflicted*, since Troubles thus sustained, never fail to turn to the Sufferers unspeakable Advantage.

2. BUT it was not in the Passive kind alone, that he discharged himself so well, his Virtue was Active too. Many of his good Works there are which should not, and Some which scarcely can be, forgotten. Such were his Honesty and strict Justice in his Dealings, His Moderation and Prudence, The Peaceableness of his Temper, and Readiness to compose Differences, His Integrity and Candour,

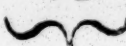
Good Men after Death. 241

Candour, his Modesty and Humility, SERM. VI.
which recommended him to the Conversation, and the good Opinion, of all that had Opportunities of knowing him. He was remarkably careful to discharge the Duty of those several Capacities God had placed him in. An Affectionate Husband, a kind Relation, a faithful and generous Friend. And, though he left no Issue of his own, yet did not that destroy, but diffuse rather, the Relation of a Father; for he was such in some sort to Several, whom Nature had set at a greater Distance from him. His Piety and great Regard to Religion was testified, by attending diligently upon the Publick Worship of God, as oft as his Indispositions would permit. And his Love of the Beauty and Decency of the House and Service of his Great Master cannot die, so long as the * Place where we are now assembled, stands. For This is a lasting Monument of that Generosity and Godly Zeal, which moved in the foremost Rank of those many noble Contributors, to so necessary, so becoming, so pious a Work. And his Charity to the Living Temples
R of

* Deptford
Church re-
built, 1697

SERM. of the Holy Ghost, as it was freely extended upon fit Occasions in his Lifetime, so is it continued in a very large and useful Provision for the Benefit of the Poor after his Death. I forbear several of the Works of this kind, which, together with these now mentioned, no doubt *do follow him*, and are already, (we trust) begun to be repaid, in the Comforts and Joys of a Blessed Immortality.

THE only Thing left for Us to do, is carefully to copy after such good Examples; that when we shall be called upon, (as shortly we shall) we may with holy Trust, and steady Submission to God's Will, commit our selves into the Hands of our most merciful Creator and Redeemer. And such a Trust and chearful Resignation, I, who, by the particular Approbation of his Reverend and very worthy Pastor, attended him in his last Hours, did with great Satisfaction observe in Him, in the very Agonies of Death. For even then his Mind was much composed; and, except the tender Impressions which the Tears of his dearest Relations made upon his Spirits, all seem'd easy and

and full of Content to him. So much S E R M.
Power had the Hopes of a better VI.
World to Sustain him in his last Conflicts. 
But now those Conflicts are happily over,
and the truest Honour and Affection we
can pay to his Memory, is to bless God
for that perfect Peace, and sweet Tran-
quility, which we believe he hath ex-
changed this dangerous and troublesome
Life for ; and so to imitate his commen-
dable Actions, and resemble his meek
Christian Temper and good Dispositions,
that We may, in God's due Time, meet
again, at our Joyful and Blessed Refur-
rection ; Even then, when all Those
who *have died in the Lord*, shall *shine as*
the Brightness of the Firmament, when
these *vile Bodies of ours shall be fashioned*
after Christ's glorious Body, to live, and
reign with Him for ever and ever. So
amply shall even these Bodies be recom-
pensed for their present Sufferings and
Decay ; So sweet shall be their Rest ; To
so excellent Purposes shall every good
Man's Works follow him. Which that
Ours may do, let us pray and endeavour
with all our Might, that we may live and

SERM. die in Him, who lived and died, and rose
VI. again for Us, the Blessed Jesus, the Son
of God: To whom with the Father and
Holy Spirit, Three Persons and One God,
be all Honour and Glory, now and for
evermore. *Amen.*





SERMON VII.

T H E
SEAMAN'S OBLIGATIONS
T O

Gratitude *and* a Good Life.

Preach'd before the
TRINITY-HOUSE,
J U N E 5. 1699.



P S A L M cvii. 23, 24.

*They that go down to the Sea in Ships,
and do Business in great Waters :*

*These Men see the Works of the Lord,
and his Wonders in the Deep.*



HIS Psalm hath been interpreted by Some, as if it were one entire Allegory : The four Temporal Calamities mentioned here, denoting so many Spi-

R 3

ritual

August.
Enarr. in
hunc Psal.

246 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

SERMON. ritual Punishments, or Troubles upon
 VII. the Mind. The Want and Wandring in
 Ver. 3—8. the Wilderness, figuring Mens Errors and
 Ignorance of the right Way to their
 V. 10—15. Heavenly Country: The Captivity and
 Exile, those Difficulties in doing well,
 with which long offending does, as it
 were, clog and fetter harden'd and habitu-
 al Sinners: The Sickneſs and Want of
 V. 17—22. Appetite, reſembling that general Diſreliſh
 to Virtue, and the Things of God and
 Eternity, which attends a carnal Life,
 and worldly Diſpoſition: And the Storms
 V. 23—31. and Dangers at Sea made uſe of, as a fit
 Emblem, for the Trials and Toliings of a
 boiſterous World, particularly for the
 Perſecutions of Good Men and the Truth:
 And ſince from all theſe Things too God
 in his Mercy delivers Men upon their
 earneſt Application to him, therefore
David calls upon all thoſe for their Sa-
 crifice of Thanks and Praise, who have
 at any time receiv'd ſuch valuable Bleſ-
 ſings.

Chryſo-
 ſtom. Hie-
 ronym.

OTHERS there are, who have thought
 this a Prophecy of the Goſpel-Age,
 and that, by the Men in my Text parti-
 cularly,

Gratitude and a Good Life. 247

cularly, who go down to the Sea in SERM.
Ships, and do Business in great Waters, VII.
are meant those Apostles of our Blessed
Saviour, who, from the Trade of Fisher-
men, were chosen to be Preachers of the
Christian Faith: That *these Men saw the*
Works of the Lord, and his Wonders in
the Deep, when God revealed to them
the profound Mysteries of the New Co-
venant: Such as the Redemption of Man-
kind by a crucified Jesus, the Trinity
of Persons in the Divine Essence, (which
the Church, at this Season more especi-
ally, adores) and sundry other Doctrines
of our most Holy Religion, which no
Reach of human Reason can fathom, no
Wit could have discovered, had not
God's own Spirit led Men into the Know-
ledge and Belief of them.

BUT, waving these more distant Con-
structions, I shall keep close to that most
obvious and natural one, which the
Psalmist seems to have had first, if not
only, in his View: And that is, from a
Consideration of the several Events of
human Life, whether they be prosperous
or adverse, whether private or publick,

248 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

S E R M. to awaken and stir Men up to a Remem-
 VII. brance of God and their Duty. For,
 that such was his Design, seems abundantly manifest from that remarkable Conclusion of the Psalm, *Whoso is wise will observe these Things, and they shall understand the Loving Kindness of the Lord.*

Ver. 43.

Now, though such a wise Observation be no doubt intended here, as, by convincing Men, that all these Things are ordered by the Providence of God, might be a powerful Motive to the Discharge of every Part of their Duty; yet the Effect of it principally aimed at, is Thanksgiving; Publishing the *Praises* of that God for his Goodness, and declaring the *Wonders* that he doth for the Children of Men. This is the Exhortation so often repeated, and so earnestly inculcated here; and urged from a Recollection of the many Afflictions and sore Distresses, out of which the Great Governor of the World, who disposes our Fortunes of every kind, rescues them, who in Extremity flee to Him for Refuge. This Acknowledgment he calls upon all People

Ver. 8.

Ver. 15.

Ver. 21.

Ver. 31.

Gratitude and a Good Life. 249

ple to pay ; because the Instances of the S E R M
VII.
Divine Goodness are so many, so conspicuous ; that it must argue great Inadvertency, not to see, and reflect upon them, when they happen to Others : But this he requires in a peculiar Manner from Them, who have had Experience of that Goodness themselves. For, if the eminent Proofs of such a Providence ought, and will naturally not fail to move us, when we are mere Standers-by, and Spectators only ; it must certainly betray a very wretched Degree of Stupidity, and a horrible Unworthiness, for those Men to continue ingrateful and insensible, who have personally felt and tasted that the Lord is gracious : For Such to retain no becoming Impressions, no religious Remembrances, of either those amazing Dangers, or those seasonable and wonderful Preservations, which have been brought home to them, and made their own Case.

AGAIN, if barren Desarts, and dark Prisons, if Beds of Languishing and Storms at Sea, do, by an almost irresistible Necessity, drive the profanest and most profligate Wretches to their Prayers :
and,

250 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

SER M. and, if, when such as these *cry unto the*
 VII. *Lord in their Trouble, he do not disdain*
 to hear, and *deliver them out of their*
Distress; What can excuse those Vaga-
 bonds and Captives, those once sick, and
 just sinking Men, if they shall not be as
 liberal and as loud in their Praises after-
 wards, as formerly they were in their
 Calls and Complaints; if they shall
 neglect to testify before all the World,
 that they look upon God as their Savi-
 our and mighty Deliverer, and own their
 present Safety and Successes to be en-
 tirely the Work of a Wise, and Kind,
 and Omnipotent Providence?

THIS is evidently the Sum of the Pro-
 phet's Argument in the Psalm before us.
 The Force whereof might without great
 difficulty be illustrated from any of the
 Cases specified in it; but from never a
 one of them, I think, to better Advan-
 tage, than that to which my Text, and
 the Quality of this Audience and So-
 lemnity, now determine me. For if
 there be any sort of People, who have
 not only observed, but perpetually con-
 verted with, invincible Demonstrations of
 a God

Gratitude and a Good Life. 251

a God and Providence ; if Any, whose S E R M. VII.
Obligations to Religion and Thankfulness
are more sensible, more indispensable,
than those of Common Men ; where may
we reasonably expect to find these, rather
than among them, *who go down to the Sea
in Ships, and do Business in great Wa-
ters, who in so signal a Manner see the
Works of the Lord, and his Wonders in
the Deep ?*

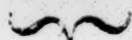
THE Persons spoken of in my Text,
are not they, who make Voyages of Plea-
sure or Convenience, but such as make
the Sea their Occupation, and constant
Way of living. And to These I shall di-
rect my Discourse at present, by treating
of the Words, and the Thing intended
by them, under the Two following
Heads.

- I. *First*, I shall endeavour, I will not
say, to inform, (for who can fairly
be suppos'd ignorant of so obvious
and evident a Truth ?) but rather
to put Such in Remembrance, that
the Dangers and Deliverances pe-
culiar to this Course of Life, are the
Effects

252 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

SERM.

VII.



Effects of a Divine Providence.
And then,

II. *Secondly*, I shall shew, what Influence this Consideration ought to have upon all, who have had the Experience of such a watchful and powerful Providence over them.

I. *First*, I say, The Dangers and Deliverances proper to a Sea-faring Life are eminently the Effects of a Divine Providence. The same Reason, which convinces every thinking Man, that this material World, and each part of it, must needs have been framed by some Eternal and Infinite Being, will, when pursued through its just Consequences, teach us to conclude also, that these Things now can no more govern and preserve themselves, than they could originally make themselves. The wondrous Order and regular Process, observable in Natural Causes and Effects, do indeed illustrate the Wisdom and Management, but they do by no means weaken the Belief, or take away the Necessity, of a Higher
and

Gratitude and a Good Life. 253

and Super-intending Power. For, that SERM.
these lower Agents do in most Cases ope- VII.
rate alike, proves them to be confined to
Rule and Method; But, that they do not
always produce the same Effects, is no
less an Evidence, that they are under the
Direction of a Supreme Cause, which
checks, and limits, and over-rules their
Influences, as He sees fit. Thus both the
regular and the excepted Cases conspire
to prove the Being and Providence of
God. For there is in all the Works of
Nature so much Constancy, as argues
the World to be govern'd by an intelli-
gent Being; and yet so much Variety
in Events, and so surprising Changes too,
as evince that Being to be an Agent free
in his Determinations, and absolute in
his Dominion; that None of the most
uniform Productions are fixed by a fatal
Necessity; None of the most efficacious
Means so sure of succeeding, as never to
be put by their ordinary Course; not One,
in a word, exempted from the Counter-
mand of his Disposal.

WE shall do well then to conceive of
Almighty God, as of a wise and watch-
ful

254 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

SER M. ful Pilot, always at the Helm, and steering
 VII. ing his own World; taking the Advantage of natural Instruments, and letting this great Vessel drive before them, so long as these, like prosperous Gales and favourable Tides, make way for his good Purposes: But when they bear down hard, and grow too violent; then interposing his Skill and Strength, shifting the Course, or checking the Current, or by some other Arts to Us unknown, bringing the most furious, the most irresistible Efforts of Created Nature in Subjection to the Counsel of his own Will.

AND if this be, as certainly it is, the State of Providence, and of the World in general; then, where these Interpositions are most frequent and visible; where such Agents and Causes, as seem most ungovernable, do yet submit to such Restraints, and become flexible and useful; where Human Measures, which can only proceed upon regular and ordinary Operations, are most impotent, and manifestly at a Loss; There we cannot, with any fair and probable Reasoning, but ascribe such Events, as are contrary to, or above the

Gratitude and a Good Life. 255

the Reach of, Matter and Motion, to the
marvellous Address and commanding Ef-
ficacy of that wise and powerful Lord,
who (as the Psalmist says elsewhere)
sitteth in the Heavens, and ruleth over
all from the Beginning.

SER M.
VII.

Psalm ciii.
19.

UPON this Account, we may very well
imagine, it is, that the Scripture does,
upon all Occasions, take such particular
Care to assert and inculcate that Govern-
ment, which God exercises over the
Winds and the Seas: For These are Parts
of Nature, fierce and impetuous above
the Rest, various and uncertain in their
Motions; the most unaccountable, the
most unmanageable, of all the Creatures
in this lower World; and, by Conse-
quence, the most pregnant Testimonies
of an over-ruling Providence, in all those
astonishing and mighty Alterations, which
we so frequently perceive in them. Hence

God is said to *set Bounds to the Sea*, to Jer. v. 22.
shake it, to *shut it up with Doors*, to Hag. ii 7.
dry it up, to *rebuke it*, to still its Roar- Job xxxviii
ings, to *silence the Noise of its Waves* 8.
when they rebel; and that, *though its* Isa. l. 2.
Waters be mad, and rage horribly, yet Neh. i. 4.
Ps. lxxxviii.
8.

Ps. ciii.
5.

256 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

SER. M. *still the Lord who dwelleth on high is*

VII.

mightier. So again, the Winds are very

Pf. cxlviii. emphatically styled the Winds of God,

8. and the Breath of God; with These he is

Job xxxvii. 9, 10. said to blow, and the *Waters swell*;

Pf. cxxxv. These he *brings out of his Treasures*;

7. Psal. xxix. with these he *rends the Mountains, scat-*

and cxlviii. *ters his Cold and Frost, straitens the*

Job xxxvii. 10. *Waters, and hardens them like solid*

Metal. And farther yet, for These he is

Job xxviii. said to make Weights and Measures, to

25. stay their roughest and most tumultuous

Isa. xxvii. 8. *Insults, to quell all their boisterous Rage,*

and, with a *Peace be still*, to hush their

Noise and Confusion into a profound

Calm. Nay, to go no farther than this

Passage now before us; the *Works* and

Wonders here ascrib'd to God, are ex-

Ver. 25, pressed by the *Storm arising at his*

&c.

Word, the Waves of the Sea rolling and

foaming, tossing Men up to Heaven,

and sinking them down again to Hell;

driving them to their Wits End, and

damping the very stoutest of them all;

and yet, even then, when neither Courage

nor Conduct, neither Hearts nor Hands

are of any longer Service; God continues

the

Gratitude and a Good Life. 257

the same still: He is not deaf to our S E R M.
Prayers; nor are these rudest and most VII.
rugged of all Elements deaf to his Re-
proofs, but even the Storms fulfil his
Word, and blow but by Commission: He
finds no Difficulty in quieting the Tem-
pest, and smoothing the Face of the
Deep; but raises and instantly fixes the
Hearts melting down with Anguish and
Despair just before, and makes them glad
by setting them *at Rest, and bringing* Ver. 30.
them to the Haven, where they would be.

This gets him an indisputable Title to the
Praises of such Men; Even the succouring
them in an Extremity, when human Helps
could avail nothing; when even Hope it
self was lost; when any Power less than
divine must have been defeated in the At-
tempt to deliver them.

BUT in all Cases of this Nature, it is
not enough, to be satisfied that God is the
Doer and Disposer of them, unless we be
likewise careful to observe, with what De-
sign he does them, and what those Pur-
poses are, which he would have served,
by the Hardships we sustain, the Dangers
we are threaten'd with, and the surpris-
zing

258 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

SERM. zing Rescues from or Successes after
VII. them.

Now, though we are not allow'd to judge of the Proportion of any Man's Virtue or Guilt, or God's Love or Hatred toward him, by that Measure of Good or Evil, which befalls him in this present Life: Yet thus much in the general is true, that all Afflictions are, and ought to be received, as Chastisements of Sin; and all Deliverances acknowledged, as Marks of God's Favour and Kindness. Blessings, 'tis true, may by our own Mismanagement be converted into Curses and Instruments of Ruin: And Sufferings, by a prudent Virtue, may be exalted into the most valuable Mercies. The Former may be plentifully imparted to the Wicked, and the Latter made the Portion of the Just: But still this hinders not, why, speaking of these Dispensations at large, the Psalmist here, and We by his Example, may not attribute Mens Calamities to their Faults which had provoked God; and their better Successes to some Behaviour well-pleasing in his Sight. Thus we find *Men being bound*

Jer 9, 10.

Gratitude and a Good Life. 259

in Affliction and Iron, charged upon their S E R M.
rebelling against the Words of God, and VII.
contemning the Counsel of the most High. ~

And Fools are said, because of their V. 17. &c.
Transgression to be plagued with Sick-
ness, to abhor all manner of Meat, and
to draw nigh to the Gates of Death.

It is confess'd, that no such Cause is positively assigned here ; but sure there is nothing particular in the Reason of the Thing, which should forbid us applying it to Storms and Shipwrecks, as well as to Imprisonment and Bodily Diseases. But in the Mercies mentioned throughout this Psalm, there is no Place for probable Conjectures ; for in every one of these, express Notice is taken of its being a Reward to them, who fled to God for Succour, and took Sanctuary in Him, when other Helps and Comforts had forsaken them. And hence the Duty of Praise is urged as a necessary Instance of Gratitude, for so ready an Acceptance, so successful a Return, of such Prayers : For that you see is the constant Burthen of this Holy Song : *When they cried unto the* Ver. 8, 15,
Lord in their Trouble, and he delivered 15, 19, 21,
28, 31.
them

260 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

S E R M. *them out of their Distress: O that Men*
 VII *would therefore praise the Lord for his*
Goodness, and declare the Wonders that
he doth for the Children of Men!

WITHOUT entring then into any Niceties concerning this Matter, or shewing how far temporal Good and Evil are, from distinguishing Characters of the Divine Affection and Displeasure, though at the same Time the One be most truly the Effect of God's Goodness, and the Other of Man's Sin; I shall take it for granted, that all who consider the different Events of human Life to be the Work of God, do likewise allow them to be wrought with some wise Design; and that Each sort requires some Use and Improvement to be made of it, in proportion to its Nature and Quality: And thus much is sufficient to ground my Other general Head upon, wherein I proposed to shew,

II. *Secondly*, WHAT Influence the Consideration of Dangers and Deliverances being all from God, ought to have upon Men, whose own Experience hath convinced them of such a watch-
 ful

Gratitude and a Good Life 261

ful and powerful Providence ; such, as is S E R M.
VII.
*over those particularly, who by going down
to the Sea in Ships, and following their
Business in great Waters, have seen the
Wrks of the Lord, and his Wonders in
the Deep.*

THE only Fruit insisted on here is Thankfulness ; nor had the Prophet occasion to demand more ; for This alone, when rightly grounded, and diligently cultivated, is so noble a Product, and of so large Extent ; that, as to be reproached with Unthankfulness is a Character of universal Infamy : So to be truly Thankful for the Mercies of God, is, in the just Latitude of the Word, but another Name for a Good Man, and a Good Christian. For,

1. No Man doubts, but this implies never-dying Remembrances, and very warm and affectionate Resentments of the Benefits we have received. And, in regard that out of such Abundance of the Heart the Mouth will naturally speak, from hence will follow,

262 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

SERM. 2. FREE and publick Declarations of
VII. God's Love and Mercy upon all fit Occasions; Nor yet only so, but

3. A constant Care not to displease or affront One, who hath been so bountiful to, and tender of Us. For to profess grateful Resentments, without attesting to them by respectful Behaviour, is manifest Insincerity; and to proclaim our Obligations to a Person, whom we disoblige in Return, is to reproach ourselves with the greatest Baseness, and to publish our Hypocrisy to all the World. Nay,

4. TRUE Gratitude will think itself concerned to vindicate the Honour, and promote the Advantage of its Benefactor. And That which is so toward God, will study to advance his Glory; and by Example, Persuasion, or such other Methods, as the Person's Circumstances qualify him for, will labour to gain over Others to a reverent and just Opinion of Him, and of that Religion, which he is pleased in Condescension to call His Cause and Interest, and the doing him Service.

Gratitude and a Good Life. 263

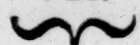
5. A Man truly Thankful for Suc- SERM.
VII.
cours received heretofore, will, with
great Contentedness and a chearful Faith,
depend upon God in any Distresses for
the Time to come. Even our Friends
upon Earth take it ill to be distrusted,
who yet have little in their Power, and
but seldom very much in their Will.
But what can be a greater Indignity,
than to suspect the Care, or be uneasy
under the Conduct, of that Friend a-
bove, who cannot deceive, who will not
forsake us; especially after many sensible
and surprizing Experiments, both of his
Inclination, and his Ability, to do us
good?

6. *Lastly*, THEY, who are Thankful
for past Deliverances, will be compas-
sionate to Others in the like Danger and
Distress. The Remembrance of their
own Case will dispose them to this Ten-
derness, as Men; and, as Christians, they
will need no other Incitement, than this
single Reflection, That they who relieve
the least of their Lord's Members, do it
to Himself. So that This is in effect a
paying back the Kindness; a Thing
S 4 which

264 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

SERM.

VII.



which true Gratitude eagerly takes all Opportunities of doing. And, though the Return be not made, either in Kind, or in Quantity, yet it is such as poor Mortals are capable of; such as argue their Wishes and Readiness to do more; and such as He, whose Debtors they are, is content to accept for good Payment.

THESE are all so genuine, so necessary Evidences of Thankfulness; and the Reasonableness of them is so obvious, that I shall not hold my self obliged to enlarge upon our Engagements to them. No Benefactor among Men looks upon himself well treated upon other Terms; and he, who declines any of these upon proper Occasions, all his dissembled Professions ought, and will be sure with Wisemen, to go for nothing. And therefore all I shall do more, is only to apply my self to this Assembly, with regard to each of the foregoing Particulars, and so conclude.

I. *First* then: FOR the begetting in you becoming Resentments for the Mercies of God in your Preservation, I shall not, I need not, attempt any artificial

De-

Gratitude and a Good Life. 265

Description of the infinite Hazards, or SERM.
VII.
surprising Providences, peculiar to that
Manner of Life, in which the Education
and Affairs of so many now before me
have engaged them: The Wonders and
the Works of Wisdom, which conversing
with remote Countries, hath made you
Eye-witnesses of; nor the Difficulties and
sundry Kinds of Death, which distant
Climates, and especially your Passage to
and from them, have so often exposed
you to. You know very well, that the
Terrors of a Storm, or a Wreck, are but
feebly represented by Words; and that
Experience leaves behind it more lively
and lasting Images of this kind, than all
the laboured Rhetorick in the World.
The Ancients seem to have so just a No-
tion of this Matter, as to make it almost
a Proverb, That * *He who hath never
been at Sea, can scarcely know what it is
to be in Danger.* And then surely, They
who have known, and felt, and lived
constantly in, and often escaped from
This;

* O Fortunate, nescis quantum periculi præterieris, qui
nunquam es ingressus Mare.

266 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

S E R M. This; This, in comparison whereof nothing it seems was esteemed dreadful enough to deserve the Name of Danger, these Men cannot easily be supposed ever to forget it.

VII.

AND yet it must be confess'd, with regard to Your Case, that those Ancients were but little, and the Age of *David* not at all, acquainted with the most formidable Part of that, which Your good God hath carried You through. The only Perils They had in view, were such as grow from Winds, and Waves, and warring Elements: Nor were Men then aware of any other End of *going down to the Sea in Ships*, but that of *doing the Business* of Traffick there. And, What is the Fatigue, What the Hazard of This, when set against the very distant Uses, which later Times have found for these *Great Waters*, and the fatal Improvement since made to their Dangers? For, as if even the most merciless Parts of the Creation had been too sparing and tender of our Safety; the Men industrious in the Art of Killing, have brought the Two most

Gratitude and a Good Life. 267

most cruel, the Two most distant Elements in the World, to conspire together, and mutually to assist in the more effectual Destruction of Mankind. They have contrived to burn one another in the Water, to drown their Enemies in liquid Fire, to turn their Vessels into floating Batteries, and make the Ocean it self a Field of Blood. It is in this most frightful Form, that several of You have often met Death: And shall I suppose it possible, that such complicated Horrors can ever slip out of your Minds? That you should not frequently and seriously recollect, who made so gracious a Distinction in the Day of Battle, when Thousands fell beside you, and Ten Thousand at your Right Hand, and yet the fatal Ball came not nigh you? No, no. You stand here this Day so many living Monuments of Mercy, so many undeniable Demonstrations of a wonderful Providence; and you must not, you cannot forget God, while you continue to remember your Selves.

S E R M.

VII.

268 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

S E R M.

VII.

Jer. 32.

2. IF then this be, as I ought to presume it is, the inward Sense of your Souls, your Obligations to the *Second* Thing are very apparent, That of making your Thanks solemn and publick. This the Prophet requires, that such as have escaped the Perils of the Sea, *would exalt God in the Congregation of the People, and praise him in the Seat of the Elders.* His meaning is, That these open Acknowledgments are a Tribute due for Deliverances so eminent; because they set forth the Glory of God, they put others upon observing, how Wise, and Powerful, and Good he is, and encourage all that see and hear them, to serve and depend upon One so Able, so Ready, to help them that seek him. But there is yet another Reason, which should move Them to it, whose Lives have been exposed upon the publick Account: For it is no small Mercy, that God hath made Such, Instruments of a general Good to their Country. You therefore are bound, above all Men, to

praise

Gratitude and a Good Life. 269

Praise God in the Congregation of the People, because the whole Congregation will not fail to praise God, not only with you, but for you. If Trade flourish and Wealth increase; it is because Your Industry and Courage transplant the Product of distant Countries hither, and make all Their Conveniences Ours. If this Island enjoy the Benefits of its happy Situation; it is because that Sea, which God hath made our Rampart and Entrenchment, hath been stoutly defended by our Navies: Without these, the Nation must be so far from rich and prosperous, that it could not so much as be safe. And That which renders us so useful to our Friends, so formidable to our Enemies, and so secure from Foreign Invasions, is not so much our Numbers, or our Home-growth, or our Wall of Waters; as the Advantages of our Commerce Abroad, and the invincible Valour of our Fleets at Home. This we justly esteem our proper Strength; and to it, under God, ascribe our Glory and Protection: And therefore

S E R M.
VII.

270 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

S E R M. therefore They, who do gallantly, and are
 VII. successful upon these Occasions, are much
 to blame, if They do not publish the
 Praises of God, because they are sure
 to meet with so many, disposed to join
 in those Praises with them. For Such
 we pray and fast when in Action and
 Danger; and, in so doing, we pray and
 fast for our Selves. And when such
 return with Victory or Peace, they en-
 gage us to come into their Thanks, not
 only as Christians, but as Parties; not
 out of Fellow-feeling, but Self-Love.
 Their Interest and Ours is one and the
 same; we all find a vast Account in their
 Safety; and, in Their Conquests and De-
 liverances, do in effect commemorate
 our Own.

3. But, *Thirdly*, They, who have pro-
 ceeded thus far, ought to be put in
 mind, that the most substantial Part of
 Thankfulness is still behind; That, I
 mean, which consists in the Man's Ac-
 tions and Behaviour. For, as in such
 Benefactors among Men, whose Con-
 dition sets them so much above us, that
 they

Gratitude and a Good Life. 271

they do not need, or we cannot repay what we have received from them, in Kind, the only way left us to testify our Gratitude, is by respecting, and pleasing, and doing them Honour and Service; So, and much more is it, in the Benefits we receive from the Great and most High God. We are therefore taught in our excellent * Liturgy to pray for such a due Sense of his Mercies, as may make us *unfeignedly thankful*, and prove that *we are so, by shewing forth his Praise, not only with our Lips, but in our Lives*. Now, if the bestowing Life and Being at first do vest in him a Title to our Obedience, then, so oft as this Gift is repeated, so much the more that Claim is strengthen'd. The very Design, in truth, of all his Blessings is to invite, and encourage, and (by Engagements, the most forcible of any to an ingenuous Temper) even to constrain us to Virtue and Goodness; to make us in love with so kind a Master, and chearful in doing our utmost for Him, who hath done so much for Us. And, which

SERM.
VII.

General
Thanksgiving.

272 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

S E R M. which way can We evade this Obligation,
 VII. especially when the most we can do for
 Him is so much less than his Due, and
 the least he hath done for Us, so much
 more than our Desert? After a long Re-
 cital of the many Miracles in behalf of
 the *Israelites*, God is said to have wrought
 them all for this very Purpose, *that they*
 Psal. cv. *might keep his Statutes, and observe his*
 ++ *Laws.* And in another Place, this is
 mention'd as the dreadfulest Aggrava-
 tion of that People's Wickedness, that
 Psal. lxxxviii. *they forgot, and rebelled against God,*
who had done so great Things for them.
 But what need I urge Scripture Instan-
 ces and Arguments, when nothing can be
 plainer, from the very Nature of Grati-
 tude, than that each Person ought to
 make his Diligence in pleasing God, hold
 Proportion with the Marks of his having
 been the peculiar Care of his Providence,
 and be as signally religious, as he hath
 been signally blessed?

I f then, as was before observed, the
 Affairs of so many here present have been
 so full of Hazard, and their Deliveran-

Gratitude and a Good Life. 273

ces so full of wonder, it will lie upon S E R M.
their Consciences, very seriously to exa- VII.
mine, what sort of Requital they have
made for these Mercies. Most certain it
is, God does not save Men from the Sea,
and the Sword, that, when they come
ashore, *they may give themselves up to*
the Devil's Service, and walk before him
without Fear, in Unholiness and Un-
righteousness all the Days of their Life.
He expects to have his Name called up-
on after another Manner, than in Oaths,
and Curses, and blasphemous Terms of
Defiance and Contempt. He will ac-
count severely with those Wretches, who
dare his Vengeance, and cry aloud to
him to rot those Bodies, and to damn
those Souls, which he with so Fatherly a
Tenderness hath rescued from Destruc-
tion. My Design herein is not to up-
braid, or accuse, but seasonably to warn,
the Men of this Profession; that they
would consider in time, how large an
Article in their last great Account the
Good Providence of God over them in
their Dangers and Necessities will one
Day

274 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

S E R M. Day make; and that it were better, infinitely better for them, to have fallen by the Enemies Hand, or to have been drown'd in the Depth of the Sea, than to have survived Both, to no other Effect, than that most sad one of enflaming their Reckoning, and heating their Furnace seven Times hotter, by their horrible Ingratitude and Abuse of such marvellous Loving Kindness.

VII.

4. BUT I said before, *Fourthly*, that a true Principle of Thankfulness will not allow Men to be contented with their own private Virtue, but will render them zealous Promoters of God's Glory, by winning over Others to his Service. The Methods and Opportunities for effecting this, differ greatly, according to our different Stations and Capacities in the World. But I esteem my self happy in addressing this Day to several worthy Persons, whose Authority and Posts of Command may be exceeding useful in this Particular: Persons, whose good Example may inspire, and whose Discipline may enforce, the Exercise of Religion; At
least

Gratitude and a Good Life. 275

least these could not fail to discountenance Vice, and give a Check to the Insolence of open Immorality and Profaneness. You are, my Brethren, Men of Honour; and that Character will not endure, that your Prince, or your Friend should be ill treated in your Presence: Can it then consist with this Character, patiently to see and hear the King of Kings, and your best Friend above, affronted and reviled? Your Honourable Society derives its Name from the Holy and ever-blessed Trinity; and will not that Title reproach every Member of this Body, who, without Punishment or due Rebuke, shall suffer the Majesty of the *Father* to be despised, the Blood and Wounds of the *Son* to be invoked in Sport and Derision, and contemptuous Despise to be done the *Spirit of Grace*? The most glorious Improvement of Navigation would be to spread Christianity wider, and enlighten the still dark Corners of the Earth with saving Knowledge; and the readiest Way of compassing this noble End would be, by making the Light of those who

S E R M.

VII.

T 2

already

276 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

S E R M. already profess the Gospel, so to shine in
 VII. barbarous Countries, that our good
 Works might recommend, and demonstrate the Excellence of our Faith.

LIVE then, my Brethren, as becomes Men, whom the Lord hath redeem'd, and deliver'd from Perils various, and Deaths oft: Live so, that Strangers, who are not yet acquainted with the Doctrine of *Jesus*, may read it plainly in Your Conversation: Live so, that, having first reform'd your Selves, you may, with Boldness and a good Grace, reprove, and set about reforming Others. And let those under your Conduct see, that you are in very good Earnest; and that you think the Honour of your Post concerned for no sort of Order and Discipline more, than for that, which hath respect to Virtue, and Religion. It hath been said Formerly, that ** he who would learn to be devout should go to Sea*: And, I dare say, You would be loath to have
 such

* Qui vult esse devotus, abeat in mare.

Gratitude and a Good Life. 277

such an Infamy fall upon Your Days, S E R M.
as that of reversing the Observation, and VII.
having the Sea thought the ready Course
for transforming Men into Infidels and
Brutes. As therefore you have done in
the Cause of your King and Country, so
behave your selves valiantly in the
Cause of your God. Vice, it is true,
hath gathered Strength, and with an un-
usual Confidence seems to bid all good
Men Battle. But Vice is never so tri-
umphant, that Resolution may not bring
it under. Let but that Gallantry appear
in This Point, so peculiar to the Fleets
of *England* in Others, that of bearing
down upon the Enemy again and again,
and the Day is certainly your own.
Sin carries Shame and Cowardice in its
very Nature, and cannot rally often:
And be assur'd, this is a Conquest, which,
when once thoroughly obtained, would
bring more Comfort to your selves, and
more true Honour to your Memories, than
those, which, at the Expence of so much
Blood and Toil, transmit the Names of
this Fraternity down to succeeding Ge-
nerations

278 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

S E R M. VII.  nerations. Nor are you ever more properly in your Post, than when encountering this Adversary; for the Sins of a People, and especially of that Part whose Duty it is to fight for the rest, are always the most destructive Enemy, that can make War upon any Nation.

5. WHEN your Zeal for God and the Publick hath thus exerted it self, then are you rightly prepared for the *Fifth* Branch of Thankfulness, that of Trust in God, amidst any Dangers, which shall hereafter threaten or attack you. And, however dismal these may appear, yet your former Experience of that Power and Goodness, which hath so signalized itself on your Behalf, will be of mighty Use towards drawing down upon them with Bravery. For God is never weary of doing good; but his past Blessings are so many Pledges of more and better, provided we be careful not to stop the Current; nor by our Unworthiness, and Abuse of those already received, put a Bar to his Intentions of future Favour toward us. If then your own lawful Occasions.

Gratitude and a Good Life. 279

or your Country's Defence, shall call S E R M.
 you out again to the like hazardous At- VII.
 tempts; remember, under the Shadow of
 whose Wings you were safe heretofore,
 and that He is the *same, Yesterday, and* Heb. xiii.
to Day, and for ever, even the Lord, S.
rich in Mercy, and mighty to save. Isa. lxiii. 1. *He* Pl. xxxvii.
will not forsake his that be godly, nor
shall they be confounded in the perillous
Time: So says this Psalmist, and so say in-
 finite Passages of Holy Scripture besides.
 Places, which deserve the rather to be
 considered, because, when Art and Na-
 ture have done their utmost, still nothing
 goes so far toward inspiring Men with true
 Courage, and undaunted Presence of
 Mind, as an Innocent Life, and a sted-
 fast Faith. These only can furnish Men
 with that threefold impenetrable Defence,
 of which no Terrors can disarm them, A
 Good Cause, A Good Conscience, and a
 Good God.

6. THERE is yet a *Sixth* Particular be-
 hind; and that is, Readiness to succour
 all them, whom the like Dangers and
 Disasters have reduced to want your Re-

280 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

S E R M.

VII.

lief. For, how are you thankful, if the
 escaping these do not open your Bowels
 to such of your Brethren, who actually
 suffer what You had also felt, if God in
 Mercy had not put a Difference between
 You and Them? I have already hinted,
 that both Common Humanity and Chris-
 tian Charity jointly plead in this Cause:
 And plead they do, with Arguments,
 which, since too strong to be answer'd,
 should be too powerful to be deny'd.
 And, in regard, where no Man's Abili-
 ties extend to the Supply of all that
 want, great Discretion is requisite in the
 Choice of fit Objects for our Charity; I
 should not be just to the Occasion of our
 present Meeting, did I forbear to say, that
 no Poverty, sustained upon Accounts
 purely secular, no Liberality, which pro-
 poses to itself civil Advantages only,
 hath a better Title to our Gifts, than
 that, wherein disabled Seamen and their
 necessitous Families are concern'd. Their
 Claim in truth is such, that I know not
 whether this Relief should not be rather
 call'd a Debt, than a Gift. The Wealth
 of

Gratitude and a Good Life. 281

of this Nation is in ſo great Part imported SER M.
by thoſe in the Merchants Service, and VII.
the quiet Poſſeſſion of the whole ſo ma-
niſeſtly ſecured by thoſe in his Maſteſty's;
that what we beſtow in this Way, is but
ſome ſmall Proportion of that which the
Receivers have, either help'd to get us, or
have hinder'd the Enemy's taking away
from us. And are we Men, if we can
ſuffer ſo vile a Reproach, as the ſeeing
Thoſe, whoſe Induſtry hath filled our
Stores, whoſe Valour hath fought our
Battels, at the Expence of whoſe Sweat
and Blood it is, that our Portion is grown
fat and plenteous: If we can bear, I
ſay, to ſee Theſe, or their Relicts periſh,
when Wounds, and Loſs of Limbs,
when Sickneſs, or Age, or an untimely
Death, have render'd Them or Theirs
incapable any longer, not only of ſerving
the Publick, but of ſupporting Them-
ſelves? The Rule of Equity, the Senſe
of our own Benefit, and the Common In-
tereſt, which depends ſo much upon gi-
ving all due Encouragement (I had al-
moſt ſaid in giving all Honour and Re-
ſpect)

282 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

SERM.
VII.

spect) even to the meanest Subjects, who suffer in their Country's Cause, require not only Compassion, but Generosity, from all in Circumstances to extend it. But most of all from You, whom God hath so deliver'd, and so bless'd, as to make that very Employment the Foundation of Your better Fortunes, by which so many of your Brethren have ruin'd Theirs.

*Act for Re-
gistring,
and encour-
aging of
Seamen,*

*Green-
wich Hos-
pital,*

AND, if such Reasons needed to be seconded by Examples, We in this Juncture, God be blest, abound with them. The Great Council of the Nation have wisely found their Honour and Safety concern'd, to make a lasting Provision for this Purpose. And the Glorious Preserver of our Rights and Liberties, accounts it no Indignity to a Royal Palace, to be converted into a comfortable Retreat for decay'd, and a fruitful Seminary for growing Commanders and Mariners. He, who hath been so liberal of his own Blood for our Defence, could not but bear a just and very tender Regard to Them who shed Theirs in it. And You, who have so well imitated the Courage of
your

Gratitude and a Good Life. 283

your Prince, will, I doubt not, be as SERM.
powerfully provoked to Charity, by the VII.
same Argument and Example. The
weighty Trust already reposed in your
Hands, and the careful and wise Ma-
nagement of it, do not only prove the
Disposition of faithful Stewards, but pro-
mise that of bountiful Benefactors.

OMITTING therefore any farther En-
largement, upon a Subject, which speaks
so movingly for itself, I conclude all
with hearty Prayers to God, That He,
who hath shewed you the Works and
Wonders of his Goodness so plenteously,
would give you Grace to be unfeignedly
thankful; That he would make you suc-
cessful Instruments of promoting his
Glory and the publick Good, by your
Examples, by your Authority, by re-
forming the Vicious, and suppressing
Debauchery and Profaneness in all under
your Command; by doing valiantly for
your Country, and by shewing Mercy
to your Brethren in Distress: In one
Word, that God would grant us a Suc-
cession of Good and Gallant Men, to
maintain

284 *The Seaman's Obligations to*

SERMON. maintain the Safety and Dignity of this
VII. Nation, thus continuing ever to make
the Sea our impregnable Bulwark, and
our Fleets, (what they so long have been,)
the Protection of our Friends, and the
Terror of our Enemies. And to these
Prayers, I'm sure, not only You, but
every true *Englishman* will say, *Amen.*



SERMON



SERMON VIII.

THE

CASE of Mistaken Zeal.

Preach'd at

St. PAUL's,

NOVEM. 5. 1701.



To the Right Honourable

Sir WILLIAM GORE Knt.

Lord Mayor of the City of London.

My LORD,



HOUGH Compliance with
the Command I have recei-
ved for Publishing this Ser-
mon could not in common
Decency be declined; yet I shall make
no scruple to acknowledge my Obedience
to the

SERM. *the more willing, from an Apprehen-*
 VIII. *sion, that the Point here treated of was*
 ~~~~~ *never more necessary to be seriously con-*  
*sidered. And, if it were so ; Men would*  
*be soon convinced, that the Publick*  
*Good, which even the most differing*  
*Parties pretend to agree in aiming at,*  
*is never to be attained, except the most*  
*honest and pious Intentions be seconded*  
*and carried on by proper and justifiable*  
*Measures. Zeal without Knowledge*  
*does the most of any thing resemble that*  
*Fire of Hell itself, which is described*  
*by Extremity of Heat without Light.*  
*Whereas the true and profitable Zeal is*  
*regulated by that Wisdom descending*  
*from above, which we are expressly*  
 James iii *taught to distinguish by these Marks, that*  
 17. *it is first pure, then peaceable, gentle,*  
*and easy to be intreated, full of Mercy*  
*and good Fruits, without Partiality, and*  
*without Hypocrisy. This is indeed the*  
*only Principle, that can render us*  
*truly happy, not only in the Next, but*  
*even in This World ; useful to our Pri-*  
*vate or our Publick Interests. And*  
*therefore, whensoever it shall please*  
 God

# DEDICATION.

287

God to bring this Nation under any SERM.  
VIII.  
Difficulties; we shall be naturally carried to wish; for our Security, that in such Exigencies the Church may never want Store of Sons so Faithful; the Government of Subjects so Loyal; nor this noble City, Magistrates so prudent, and so deservedly in general Esteem, as all good Men do at this Day rejoice to find your Lordship.

I am,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's

Most Obedient

Humble Servant,

G. STANHOPE.





St. J O H N xvi. 2.

*--- Yea the Time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God Service.*

SERM.  
VIII.  
~~~~~



OUR Blessed Lord, who did himself condescend to feel the Infirmities of Human Nature, had a very tender Regard to them in his Disciples. He knew, how far our proper Strength is from being a Match for Terrors and Temptations; And therefore, in this parting Discourse, he promises those supernatural Instructions, Assurances, and Encouragements of the holy Spirit, which might make good that Title of the *Comforter*, whereby we find him here so frequently distinguished. But yet it often happens, that Reason, even when thus supported by Grace, is not always successful in Spiritual Conflicts; because sometimes Calamities surprize us, and double our Danger by the Suddenness of their Assaults. The Enemy is got within

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 289

within our Quarters, before ever we sus-
pected his Approach; and his Force, upon
such Occasions, is not of more formidable
Consequence, than is our own Confusion.
For Prevention of this Mischief, it was
not the least Instance of our great Mas-
ter's Kindness, that he gave his Servants
timely Warning, what Hardships they
must expect to encounter in the Discharge
of their Duty. *These Things have I* ver. 1.
spoken to you, that ye should not be of-
fended, says he. When he had thus
awaken'd in them just Apprehensions of
Evils to come; that so they might stand
collected within themselves, and draw all
their Forces of Reason and Religion to-
gether, and be constantly in a Posture of
Defence; then he proceeds to open the
Scene, and shews them the Two great
Adversaries they had to engage, and to
try their Courage upon, *Ignominy* and
Cruelty. *They shall put you out of their*
Synagogues, says the former Part of this
Verse; there's the *Ignominy*. Yea, they
shall *kill you,* says my Text; there's the
Cruelty.

290 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SERM.

VIII.

THE Former of these plainly respects the Censures of the *Jewish* Church: But in taking away the Lives of these good Men, every Nation should join. *Jews* and *Gentiles* were all disposed to This; and, for fear Humanity and good Nature should interpose in their Favour, Religion, we are told here, should be laid hold on as a Pretence to excuse, nay to justify, nay to recommend, nay even to sanctify their Venom and Rage. Men might differ widely in other Notions, but in this of a meritorious Barbarity to the Christians All should conspire. Whosoever slew a Disciple of the Holy *Jesus*, it was universally agreed, that he did *Αυτοῦ ἀγοσέειν Οὐκ*, as the Text most emphatically terms it; that is, that in shedding this devoted Blood, he offer'd up a Choice and most acceptable Sacrifice, and perform'd a very extraordinary and signal Piece of Service to the God he worshipped.

It were most heartily to be wished, that this Imagination had been confined to the Enemies of Christianity in common, and expired with the Times of the Primitive

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 291

mitive Persecutions. But, in regard we SERM.
VIII.
find by sad Experience, that the same
mistaken Principle runs through every
Age; and Christians of different Denominations and Opinions are too often transported by it to furious Heats and great Bitterness against each other: Since, when Factions and Conspiracies are formed in in the State, or Schisms made in the Church, the great Disturbers of our Peace make Zeal for God their constant Cry, and think to shelter their most irregular Behaviour under this Answer, That they act according to their Consciences: Since the Fifth of *November*, above all other Days, stands in the *English* Calendar, an indelible Monument of the unwearied (but God be praised, still unsuccessful) Attempts, animated by the wicked Principle foretold in my Text: I could not but think, the Opportunity allowed me here could not be more usefully employed, than in examining this Case, which the Words before you, and the too common Error contained in them, render so necessary at All Times, so seasonable especially at This Time, to be

292 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SERM. diligently examined and rightly understood. And that is, *What Judgment we are to make of a mistaken Zeal; whether it excuse the Persons acted by it, or at least how far it will bear one out, in the Designs and Actions that are truly owing to it.*

Now, to proceed in this Matter as clearly and as briefly as I can, I shall not entangle You or my Self in the dark and subtle Speculations of the Schools; but will rather chuse a Method more suitable to the Nature of such a Discourse as This; and carry on my Enquiry by the Help of One most remarkable Example, which will reach every Circumstance, that can be of any weight in the Question now before us.

WE read in the Book of *Acts*, what havoc St. Paul once made of the Church; what *Threatnings and Slaughter* he was continually *breathing out against them.*

The Character he gives of himself is this,
Acts viii. 3. "That He persecuted that Way unto
ix. 1, &c. "the Death, binding and delivering into
xii. 4. &c. "Prisons both Men and Women. That
xvi. 19, "He gave his Voice against their Lives,
xv. 21. "often

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 293

“ often compelled them to blaspheme, S E R M.
“ and being exceedingly mad against VIII.
“ them, persecuted them even to strange
“ Cities.” For a Vindication of these
furious Proceedings, he boasts to the *Gal.* i. 14.
Galatians, “ That he had profited in the
“ *Jews* Religion above his Equals; and
“ was more exceedingly zealous of the
“ Traditions of the Fathers:” And be-
fore King *Agrippa* this is his Apology,
I verily thought with my self, that I Acts xxvi.
ought to do many Things contrary to the ²
Name of Jesus of Nazareth.

Now the Difficulty of coming to a
right Understanding in this Point, may
seem indeed rather increas'd, and the Case
left in greater Confusion, by the very
different Accounts, which *St. Paul* gives
of himself in Scripture. For, as if, upon
This Occasion too, he thought it his Duty
to become *all Things to all Men*, You find
him one while pleading to *Ananias, Men* Acts xxiii.
and Brethren, I have lived in all good ^{1.}
Conscience before God until this Day;
and yet, writing at another Time to his
Son *Timothy*, he stigmatizes the Man of
that good Conscience, with the scanda-

294 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

S E R M. Ious Characters of *Blasphemer, Persecu-*
VIII. *tor, Injurious and Chief of Sinners.*

1 Tim. i. Sometimes we have him humble almost
 13, 16.

Ephes. iii. 8. self ἐλαχίστην ὅτι πάντων τῶν ἁγίων, *less*
than the least of all Saints; Frankly
 acknowledging to the *Corinthians*, that
 he was no better than an Abortion, *One*

1 Cor. xv. *born out of due Time, The least of the*
 8, 9. *Apostles, Not meet to be called an Apo-*

stle, because he persecuted the Church of
God. And yet the same St. Paul, to the
 same *Corinthians*, at other Times, bear-
 ing up in Competition with the best of
 them. *Am not I an Apostle? I suppose*

1 Cor. ix. 1. *I am not a whit behind the very chiefest*
 2 Cor. xi. 5. *Apostles.* And, as if in all this he had
 and 23.

1 Cor. xv. *And, as if in all this he had*
 20. *rather diminished than arrogated too much*
to himself, even claiming a Preference be-
fore the rest of his Brethren; Are they
Ministers of Christ? I speak as a Fool.
I am more; and, I laboured more abun-
dantly than they all.

AND now, *Quo teneam vultus mutan-*
tem? Who can tell from hence, where
 to fix, or what to pronounce? How shall

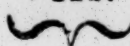
The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 295

we acquit that Blasphemer, or condemn S E R M. VIII.
this good Conscience? How commend
the Zeal of the Apostle, and yet blame
that of the Persecutor, if we will make
St. *Paul* consistent with himself, and al-
low, (as the Truth most certainly is,)
that he was acted with the self-same Zeal
for the Service of God in both Capacities?
This is that Difficulty, which I shall now
bring to a closer View; and, by conside-
ring the several Branches of it distinctly,
will attempt to render it of some Signi-
ficancy and Use to us, both for reconciling
the Intricacies of St. *Paul's* Case, and for
directing our Judgments in other Cases
of the like Nature.

To this purpose, I beg you will at-
tend to the *Four* following Particulars.

1. *First*, THAT throughout St. *Paul's*
whole Conduct, there is not the least Ap-
pearance of any Deceit or Double-dealing,
not any Perverseness or Obstinacy of
Spirit. From his Apologies to the *Gal-*
atians and King *Agrippa*, we may plain-
ly gather strong Prejudices from Custom
and Education; An extraordinary Defe-

296 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SERM. VIII.  rence for the Law of *Moses*, and an Impatience of any Contradiction to that Law. He wanted no Inclination for the Service of God and the Truth; but stood up in Defence of the *Jewish* Religion, because he thought it to be the Truth; and set himself in Opposition to the *Christian* upon this very Account, that it seem'd to Him an Imposture, and destructive of the Truth. Consequently *St. Paul* would have done better, had he but known better: And so the Defect lay, not precisely in his Will, but chiefly in his Understanding. Now the Bent and Intention of the Will being the main Thing which renders every Action formally Good or Evil; and the Dictates of a Man's Conscience being the next and immediate Guide, which the Person at that present Time is to be directed by; from hence it is, that *St. Paul* justified himself before the High-Priest; and his Conscience might in this qualified Sense, be truly styled a Good Conscience. For it guided him, according to the best Light it had then received from the Judgment; and that Guidance he readily and sincerely
ly

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 297

ly followed. Thus, whatever Offences S E R M.
St. *Paul* was drawn into upon this Ac- VIII.
count, they did not proceed from any
Prevarication, but purely from want of
more perfect Instruction; and so his Per-
secuting the Church of Christ, cannot be
esteemed a Sin of Wilfulness or Presump-
tion, but was truly and properly a Sin of
Ignorance.

II. *BUT, Secondly,* It must be remem-
bred upon this Occasion, that even be-
tween these Sins there is a Difference to
be made; and that, as in other Respects,
so especially with regard to the Object of
this Ignorance. The School-Men, who,
to give them their due, seldom let any
Thing pass without a Distinction, must be
confess'd in this Case to have a very just
one; which they call *Ignorance in Uni-*
versals, and *Ignorance in Particulars:*
So termed, because the *Former* relates to
the General Rules for Men's Actions,
and the *Latter* to the Circumstances of
each single Action by itself. The Man
that knows not what he does is Ignorant;
and He that knows not what he ought to
do

298 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SERM. do is Ignorant too; But yet these two
 VIII. Persons are not ignorant of the same
 Thing, nor in the same Manner, nor with
 the same Proportion of Guilt. When

Gen. xx. 6. *Abimelech* took *Sarah*, and knew not
 that she was *Abraham's* Wife, God ad-
 mitted his Excuse and his Integrity, so
 far as the Charge of Adultery was con-
 cerned; Because he was ignorant of a
 material Circumstance, which alter'd the
 Quality of the Fact itself. But when
Israel knew not God and his Will, their
 Country, *Isaiab* tells us, was laid deso-
 late, their Cities burnt with Fire; And
 all this, because Theirs was Ignorance in
 Point of Law and Duty. In *St. Paul's*
 Case, though there may seem to have
 been a Mixture of both these; Partly of
 the *Fact*, as he quite mistook the Per-
 sons and the Cause he persecuted, yet the
 Ignorance of the *Law* had plainly the
 stronger Influence upon him. *He verily*
thought with himself, that he ought to do
many Things contrary to the Name of
Jesus of Nazareth. His therefore was
 Ignorance in Point of Duty, and that
 render'd his Fault so much the worse. For,

III. *Thirdly,*

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 299

S E R M.

VIII.

III. *Thirdly*, EVERY Sin is aggravated to the Committer of it, as it was more easy for that Person to have avoided that Sin. Consequently, all Ignorance must needs involve the Man in a Degree of Guilt, proportionable to the Means of knowing and doing better afforded to that Man in particular. This is the main Reason, why Ignorance of the *Fact* excuses, and Ignorance of the *Law* does not; Because very material Circumstances relating to the Fact, cannot many times be fully known; But the Law lies plain and open; It offers itself freely to every Man's Consideration; It is published on purpose that it may be known; And till it be in a Condition of being known, it cannot have the Force of a Law. Now the exercising so many Barbarities as St. *Paul* did, upon Persons of a Principle different from his own, was an inhuman and very sinful Thing *in itself*: And, if the Religion he so fiercely vindicated, had been impartially look'd into, it might have appeared, that there was no ground for such Proceedings, upon the Account

300 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SERMON. Account of this Difference in particular;
 VIII. and That made it a very grievous Sin to
 Him too. The *Jewish* Law is the Foundation upon which the Gospel is built; And *Jesus* and his Disciples, who carried up that Superstructure, were so far from propagating a Doctrine which corrupted the Law; that all they taught, was that very Fulness and Perfection of it, which the Mosaical Dispensation stood in need of, which the Prophets had long promised, and the Faithful eagerly expected. Thus that mighty Proficiency in the Law, of which St. *Paul* boasts, did but add to his Offence. For, the better he was acquainted with that Law, the more obvious these Things, when fairly considered, would have been to him. And hence it is, that he laments his Unhappiness, and loads himself with Guilt, in all the severe Terms, that argue the sincerest Humiliation, and deepest Remorse. He never mentions the Blessing of his Conversion, without some Transport of Thankfulness and Joy; And in one of his Raptures tells his Son *Timothy*, that the Mercy of God did *ἐλεησέν* towards Him; Atribing

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 301

Ascribing it to the *Grace*, the *Abundant*, S E R M. VIII.
may the *exceeding abundant Grace of God* Tim. i.
in Christ Jesus. He represents himself 14.
so vile, as to be made a *Pattern of all* 1 Tim. i.
God's long Suffering to them that should 16.
hereafter believe. Like some abandoned
Wretch, to whom a Prince extends his
Mercy beyond all Hopes, and to the
Surprise of all Mankind; that the black-
est Offenders, after such an Instance, might
have no Temptation to despair of his
Clemency.

IV. *Fourthly and Lastly*, THOUGH St.
Paul's Ignorance did not acquit him of
Guilt, because it might have been reme-
died; Yet this was a considerable Abate-
ment to his Sin, that it proceeded from Ig-
norance. For all Ignorance, which is not
palpably gross and affected, is not alto-
gether a Fault, but in some measure a
Misfortune. We find our Blessed Sa-
viour upon the Cross, alledging this as
an Argument proper to incline God to
Pity, in behalf of those very *Jews* that
crucified him. *Father*, says he, *forgive* Luke xiii.
them, 34.

302 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SER. M. *them, for they know not what they do.*

VIII. Yet They were punish'd notwithstanding Their Ignorance, and St. *Paul* was pardoned by reason of His : for so he professes in his Epistle to *Timothy*, *I obtained Mercy, because I did it ignorantly in Unbelief.* He was not disobedient to the heavenly Vision, but immediately answered to the first Call, *Lord, What wilt thou have me to do ?* But the *Jews* had Miracle upon Miracle, Precept upon Precept, and still Their Return was That of the ungracious Subjects in the Parable, *We will not have this Man to reign over us.* He wanted Light, because it did not discover itself fully to him, nor was he rightly prepared to receive it : Like Men who are kept long in the Dark, or have a Blemish in their Sight. They wanted Light, because they shunn'd and hated it ; Like those Lovers of Darkneſs, who, when the Sun shines bright, shut him out, or wink hard against him. The Disposition of his Mind was right, but some violent Prejudices had corrupted his Reason, and got Possession of his Judgment. When those Scales too fell off from

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 303

S E R M.
VIII.

from the Eyes of his Mind, and he saw all Things clearly; Then he evidenced the Uprightness of his Intention, by a most indefatigable Diligence and active Zeal, by employing his natural Courage and Warmth of Temper as vigorously in Defence of Christ, as ever he had done before in Defiance of him. And in this Regard it is, (both as to his Commission and Call received immediately from Heaven, and his own faithful Execution of it,) that he equals himself with the other Apostles, declaring *He laboured more abundantly than they All*. This Sincerity and Zeal it was, that render'd so excellent a Person, so long and so unhappily misled, a proper Object of Pardon and Compassion first, and then a *Chosen Vessel, to bear his Master's Name, before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel.* ACTS IX. 15.

AND now, after having so largely discussed the Instance of our Great Apostle, there will not remain any mighty Difficulty, in coming to a tolerable Decision of the Case propounded. The whole State whereof,

304 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SERM. whereof, I think may be comprised in
VIII. these few general Conclusions.

1. *First*, A Man's proposing the most noble End, and prosecuting it with never so sincere an Intention, never so fervent a Zeal, cannot be sufficient to justify his Proceedings, if the Measures and Means made use of for compassing that End are unlawful. St. *Paul* was exceeding zealous of the Law; A Law that had been given by God himself; yet was he, notwithstanding his Design to defend Religion, a *Blasphemer, a Persecutor, and Injurious*.

2. *Secondly*, If these Methods be really sinful; and might be known to be so, if Men were not partial, or otherwise wanting to their own due Information; It is not any present Persuasion of their Lawfulness, not any Warrant or sanguine Encouragement of a mistaken Conscience, that can render them lawful to Us. St. *Paul* thought verily that he ought to do what he did; and yet, when he came to a better Sense of Things, he makes no Seruple to style himself the *Chief of Sinners* for having done it. *To the Law and to the Testi-*

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 305

Testimony, as *Isaiab* says in another Case; SERM.
VIII.
These are the Standard of Right and Wrong: And Things once fixt in their own Nature, as the Measures of Moral Good and Evil are, cannot be changed by Our Opinion of them; Nor will the Fact be in itself better or worse, because the Doer apprehends it otherwise than in truth it is. A Sin of Ignorance it is indeed, and that extenuates the Offence; But a Sin still it is, except right Reason or Scripture allow it; And consequently, Ignorance or Misapprehension will not bear that Man out, who acts contrary to the Rule of his Duty, though at the same Time he act in perfect Agreement with the present Dictates of his own Mind.

3. *Thirdly*, SOME Advantage however there may be gathered from hence, which is, That, such Sins being partly involuntary, this Ignorance may incline the Mercy of God towards the Offender. For there is always Ground to hope, that He, who knows our Frailties, will look upon them with a very tender compassionate Eye, and rather pity than punish our

306 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

S E R M. Weakness. *St. Paul obtained Mercy, be-*
 VIII. *cause he did it ignorantly in Unbelief.*

4. BUT then we must not forget to take this along with us, *Fourthly*, That, although thus much may be hoped, yet it is more than can be depended upon. Ignorance may *incline*, but it does not *engage* the Mercy of God. The Law lies open, and we must learn it at our Peril; God hath not by the Gospel-Covenant, obliged himself to such gracious Condescensions, to Them who do not; Nor is it any Argument, because he vouchsafed to convert and enlighten *St. Paul* by a Miracle, that he will go out of the common Way to Every one, who, when he has transgressed through Ignorance, wipes his Mouth, and says. he hath done nothing amiss. The Apostle, you see, was so far from supporting himself with any such vain Imagination, or esteeming his Conversion an Effect of Justice; that he extols it as the *Overflowing of God's exceeding abundant Grace, with Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus.*

5. *Fifthly*, W E learn likewise from hence, upon what Terms such Persons are

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 307

are allowed to hope for this Mercy, SERM.
VIII.
which are, provided they submit to the Truth when it offers itself to them, and give all possible Diligence to make Reparation for all the Mischiefs of their former Errors. *St. Paul* was not disobedient to the Heavenly Vision, but replied presently, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* And when he had received the Grace of God, *he laboured more abundantly than all the Apostles.*

So poor Encouragement appears upon the whole Matter, for a Mistaken, though Well-meaning Zeal; So great the Hazard and Danger it involves Men in; so very little, so very uncertain, the Comforts and Advantages to be expected from it; And all this too, supposing the most favourable Circumstances, that the Case can possibly admit. But, I appeal to this Day, whether it deserves to be thought any Breach of Charity, to suspect, that too too many, who imitate *St. Paul's* Fervency, will at last be found to want *St. Paul's* Integrity. And if, where the Intention is undissembled, and the Ignorance unaffected, a Man so hardly escape; Or, if

308 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SER. M. he do, that such a one stands a Living
 VIII. Monument of signal and uncovenanted
 Grace: Where then, Ah! where shall
 Those ungodly Wretches appear, who,
 either do not know, because they will not
 see; or carry the Cross of Christ for a
 Banner to Avarice, and Blood, and Lust;
 Who profane and prostitute this or that
 Religion to Purposes, that are a Contra-
 diction to all Religion; Whose Ambition
 and Faction is all their Zeal, and whose
Gain is their only *Godliness*?

THE Point itself being thus settled, I
 desire to leave it upon you with Two or
 Three Practical Inferences, and so con-
 clude.

I. Now, *First*, From what hath been
 resolved concerning the Nature and the
 Danger of a misguided and indiscreet
 Zeal, we are very naturally carried to
 consider, of what mighty Importance it
 is to every Man, to have his Conscience
 rightly informed. When God hath given
 us a Rule to walk by, and hath declared,
 he will take a strict Account of our
 Actions, according to their Conformity or
 Disagreement with this Rule; it highly
 concerns

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 309

SERM.

VIII.

concerns us to make His Laws the constant Measure of our Designs and Behaviour. To this purpose, we ought to examine every Thing by that Standard, and to proceed with Sobriety and Impartiality, with much Leisure and great Exactness, in such Examination. The plausible Pretences of Church and Cause, of Liberty, and Property, and Religion, will not bear us out, if we be carried away by Heat and Prepossession, by Faction and Party, by Enthusiastick and wild Imaginations. And yet all this may sometimes happen to be the Case of very well-intending Men; from the inveterate Prejudices of an unhappy Education, from the particular Complexion of their Minds, or the Warmth of an eager and blind Zeal. But God requires, that Reason and Religion should be the Compass for all his Servants to steer by; And that These should be so far from being born down by Humour, or Passion, or Interest; as to moderate, and subdue, and bring all These to an entire Obedience. He therefore, who suffers himself to be transported into any sort of Wickedness, which

310 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SERM. in his coldest Blood he cannot fairly justify, is like a Sailor without his Card ; He makes Shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience, and will be sure one Day to pay dear for that Rashness and Inconsideration, which no Goodness of Intention can make a sufficient Atonement for.

VIII.

2. *Secondly*, THIS shews us the horrible Mischiefs of violent and obstinate Prejudice. There is no Opinion so absurd, but Men so possess'd may be brought to believe and embrace it ; No Crime so black, but they may confidently engage in it, and yet all the while think themselves in the Right. And the Reason of this is very obvious and evident : Which is, that such People, when they set themselves to consider, begin always at the wrong End. For, instead of coming to their Rule, with Minds open and unbiassed, and free to entertain any Truth that shall discover itself to them ; They quite contrary bring their own Notions and Impressions along with them. These they lay down as First and uncontestable Principles, and resolve to admit of nothing for Just and True, except so far as it agrees

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 311

agrees with These. Hence it is, that S E R M.
they stretch and bend the Rule, to bring VIII.
it to their own crooked Affections and
Designs; And as some crafty Rebels
heretofore found out an Expedient, to
make War upon the King's Person by
the King's Authority; so many perverse
Interpreters of Scripture have frequently
produced God's own Word, in Vindication
of the most Ungodly Practices. Of how
malignant Influence such Proceedings are,
not only to the Parties themselves, but to
Others, how destructive of Peace and
good Order, and every Benefit of Society
and Government, plentiful Experience
hath convinced Mankind to their Cost.
And what indeed can be expected better,
from such Preachers, and such Principles,
as persuade Men, that the worst and most
exorbitant Practices may be sanctified by
a Good End and Pious Intentions?
Wretched Usurpers of the Name of
Jesus! Like Him, in no One Circum-
stance, but that, of coming not *to send*
Peace on Earth, but rather Divi-
sion; Nay, not like him even in that,
when rightly understood; For Swords

312 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SERMON.
VIII.

and publick Ruptures were only the accidental Event of His Coming, but they seem to be the very End and Purpose of Theirs. These Holy Missionaries divide that they may devour; and from the Ignorance and Credulity of the People, take Advantages of kindling such a furious Zeal, as shall set whole Kingdoms in a Flame; as blows the Coals, till all the soft Relentings of Human Nature are consumed, and makes their Profelytes ten Times more the Children of Hell, by a false Hope of ensuring Heaven to themselves. Instead of correcting the Extravagancies of Cruelty and Injustice, by Christian Considerations of mutual Forbearance, Subjection to Governors, and meek Suffering; they render their Instruments more head-strong and turbulent, more inflexibly barbarous and brutish, upon the Pretence of serving a Church or a Cause, and for fear they should seem to do the Work of the Lord negligently. Deliver us, Good God, from such dangerous Delusions; and, whenever thou thinkest fit to scourge us for our Sins, let us fall into Thy Hands, for Thy Mercies
are

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 313

are great; And not into the Hands of SREM.
Men: Least of all into the Hands of VIII.
such Men, as think *they do thee Service*
by our Destruction. For when Blood is
esteemed a Sacrifice, and Persecution com-
mences Principle, Compassion from thence-
forth becomes a Crime: And the tende-
rest Mercies of a Zeal thus inflamed, will
be sure to prove the very Extremity of
Cruelty.

3. But, *Thirdly*, Let not this disor-
derly Zeal of our very bitterest Enemies,
or the most dreadful Consequences of it,
extinguish our Charity for such mistaken
Men. These Things call for the Obser-
vance of those Commands, to *bless them*
that curse us, and pray for them who
despightfully use us and persecute us. We
may and ought to take all prudent Me-
thods of guarding our selves against the
Mischiefs of a Set of Principles, which
would, if suffered and pursued, lay all
in Ruin and Confusion; But we must
never let our Fears, or our Resentments,
transport us to the like Extravagance
which we condemn in others. And
therefore, while we are providing for our
own

314 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

S E R M.
VIII.

own Safety, we must not forget that which would be our surest Defence; The securing Providence on our Side, by entitling our selves to God's Blessing, upon all fair and lawful Means of Safety; And such are Daily Addresses, *that he would bring into the Way of Truth such as have erred and are deceived*; And inviting the Mistaken over to our Persuasion, by that Christian Meekness and Gentleness of Temper, which may assert the Credit of Religion, and prove that God is in us of a Truth. Which last Reflexion leads me to a

4. *Fourth* Inference, no less necessary than any of the former; and that is, The Unreasonableness of suffering our Minds to be prejudiced, against Things profitable and good in themselves, upon the Account of their being sometimes abused to very ill Purposes. How great a Madness would it be, to form a Judgment of those Creatures given us for the Sustainance and Refreshment of our Bodies, from the miserable Effects they have upon some Men, who ruin their Health by Luxury and Riot? And the Folly is not less, when we think meanly of a Divine Institution,

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 315

Institution, in its own Nature excellent S E R M.
and useful, for the Hypocrisy or the VIII.
Errors of Them, who turn Liberty into
Licentiousness, and Faith into Faction.
And this I cannot but think a very seasonable Caution; because the present Contempt of Religion in this sinful Age, may be thought in some measure owing to a just Abhorrence of the exorbitant Practices of Men, who have made more than ordinary Pretences to Religion. This the Devil seems to have taken hold of, for carrying Ill-disposed Minds to a very wicked Extreme; by tempting Them, who wish there were no such Thing, to think that indeed there is not. And too plausible a Temptation it is, when they see *Conscience* and *Zeal* taken up, as Words only to amuse the Vulgar, and to cloak Designs inconsistent, with either revealed Truths, or common Honesty. It is indeed a horrid Scandal, when Men profess to advance or to secure the Interests of Religion, by acting a Part that is a Contradiction to mutual Faith and all Religion. But, were not Religion in itself universally acknowledged to be Good, the mere
Zeal

316 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

S E R M.

VIII.

Zeal for it could not make so powerful an Impression; And, whatever becomes of the *Means*, yet it is plain, even such deluded Men are satisfied in the Worth and Excellence of the *End*. But since This, like all other good Things, requires an honest and prudent Use of it; the Indignation ought not to fall upon the Thing itself, but upon Them, who corrupt it, in the Abuse. Sufficient to such Men is their own Condemnation; and a heavy Condemnation no doubt they incur, whose Examples wound its Honour, and expose it to the Scorn of them, who wish it ill, and rejoice in all plausible Occasions to traduce and undermine it. But this does by no means evacuate the Wisdom of God, or the Force of Truth, or the Benefits of the Gospel. The Doctrines of the Meek and Holy *Jesus* are a System of Peace and Order, of Justice and Charity; But since those Doctrines are so framed, as to correct indeed, but not compel our Wills; there remains still a Possibility, for Ignorance and Corruption to render them Instruments of Division and Confusion. They who truly answer the

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 317

S E R M.

VIII.

the Intent of this Gospel, and have the *Power* as well as the *Form* of Godliness, will be sure to shew forth the Works of a good Conversation, in a Spirit of Meekness and Love. But, while Men continue to be Men, they must have it in their Power, to turn that *which should have been for their Wealth, into an Occasion of falling.* And the Justice of Providence is no way concerned to prevent this; since God who knows how to bring Light out of Darkness, will turn even the Sins of Men to his own Glory; and hath determined to judge every one of us at last, according to the Improvement of those good Things which we might have abused, but did not; or the Misemployment of those, which we had sufficient Warning and Direction to make a right and beneficial Use of, but would not. All which, I should think, cannot but convince any reasonable Man, how hard, and how absurd it is, that Religion itself should suffer in our Esteem, Either for the Ignorance of Them, who mean honestly but do not rightly understand it; Or for the Hypocrisy and empty Boasts of Them,

who

318 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SER M. who would be thought to have it most,
VIII. but in reality have it not.

AND this now leads me very naturally, in the *Last* Place, to conclude with the more immediate Business of this Day. A Day particularly auspicious to the *English* Church and Nation; and doubly signalized by the repeated Preservation of the Reformed Religion, and our Civil Liberties. First, By the strange and seasonable Discovery of a most barbarous and hellish Treason, whereby the King and Royal Branches, the Flower of our Clergy, Nobility, and Gentry, assembled in Parliament, were marked out for the Slaughter, and intended to be made a Burnt-Sacrifice, by that blind fiery Zeal I have been speaking of. The Horror of so many precious Lives destroyed at once by an unseen Blow: The dismal Confusion of so many immortal Souls, hurried into Eternity, without any Warning of their sudden Change, nay, without Leisure for so much as one *Lord have Mercy upon me* at the last Gasps: The Darkneſs, and Miſery, and general Conſternation, which muſt have covered the Face of the

Pub-

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 319

Publick, are now no more to be express'd, SER. M.
VIII.
than they could then have been prevented, had not the watchful Providence of God in a most Critical Minute interposed. These Things *we have heard with our Ears, and our Fathers have declared unto us, the noble Works God did in Their Days, and in the Old Time before us.* But Others of the like Nature our own Eyes have seen. Bold and Illegal Attempts, to throw down our Fences, and root up our Vineyard; and the worst of Slaveries endeavoured to be introduced, partly by a secret and subtle, partly by a High Hand: The Resentments of those, who profess to be Champions for Liberty and the Power of a Prince unhappily misled, made Instruments to lay a Yoke upon our Necks, which neither our Forefathers nor We were able to bear. And here again the same good Providence was eminently conspicuous, by defeating the Counsels of our Adversaries; and ordering Matters so, that our Safety should come, not from our Own, but from a nobler and better Hand: A Safety, bearing Date from this once more prosper-

rous

320 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

S E R M.

VIII

rous Day; and that so innocent, that the Generality of the Nation had nothing left to do, but merely not refuse their own Happiness. If then our Properties as a People, and our Reformation as a Church; If the Rights of a Monarchy independent on the usurped Supremacy of *Rome*, and the Allegiance of Subjects free from the Controul of Foreign Tyranny; If the undisturbed Exercise of a Religion truly Rational, and Primitive, and Pure, and the Regular Execution of Laws, most just, and wise, and beneficial; If the Privileges we claim by our Statutes and Customs, as Natives, and the yet more sacred and inviolable Rights belonging to us as Christians; If Sacraments unmaim'd, and Decency void of Idolatry and Superstition; If Prayers edifying, because intelligible to our People; If (which is most of all desirable,) the Scriptures freely communicated, and ready Access to those Wells of Salvation, not only allowed, but enjoined and urged to every Soul that thirsts after Righteousness; If these, I say, be Comforts and Advantages, worthy our Notice

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 321

Notice and Esteem; then have we abundant Matter of Joy, and Praise, of Thanks and Wonder: Then can no *English* Man or Protestant think any Honours or Solemnities too great, too lasting, for a Day which seems upon so many Accounts marked out to Honour; so fruitful in Blessings, to these Kingdoms, to the Reformed Religion, to *Europe* in general, as is the most deservedly, and I will add too the most devoutly, to be celebrated *Fifth of November*.

I do not therefore call upon you to remember the Blessings of this Day; We must even forget our Selves not to do that. Or, were we (which God forbid we ever should be) abandoned to a Spirit of Ingratitude, base enough to neglect them; Yet even so, 'tis but too plain, the restless Attempts of our Enemies fail not to refresh our Memories; and our repeated Dangers from the same Quarter will not suffer us to forget them. But, in order to discharge the Duty of this Place, 'tis fit I put you in mind, after what manner they should be remember'd. And will the Ceremonies (think we) of an anniversary

Y Thank-

322 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SER. M. Thanksgiving suffice for this Purpose?
 VIII. No: These alone are but an empty Pomp.
 If we have a just Sense of our Preservation, we shall be careful to walk worthy of it, and not contract any such Guilt, as we have reason to fear may forfeit and deprive us of these Benefits. We then are thankful for our Civil Liberties, when we apply all prudent Methods for the Common Security, when (Faction, and Party, and Prejudice, apart) we heartily unite in Charity and Peace; and all move like a Body animated with the same Soul, to save our selves against all Breach of Publick Faith, and every unjust Invasion of them: When, with all possible Fidelity and Zeal, our Hearts, our Hands, our Fortunes, but especially our Prayers, are constantly employed on the behalf of that Glorious Instrument of our Happiness, whom it hath pleased the Providence of God to set (and long may he sit) over us. We then, and only then, are thankful as we ought, for our Religion still secure and firm; when we rest not in outward Forms, or a false Estimate of our selves, as Professors of the best Doctrines; but
 give

The Case of Mistaken Zeal. 323

all Diligence, to express the peculiar Ex-
cellence of our Principles, by the propor-
tionably exemplary Purity of our Conver-
sations. When we worship God in Truth
and in the Beauty of Holiness; observe
Justice in all our Dealings, Moderation
to the Mistaken, Meekness towards our
Enemies, Charity towards all Men: In
a word, when we live as Christians, and
love as Brethren. Such is our Doctrine,
such consequently ought to be our Prac-
tice. To which, give me leave to say,
No one Thing would contribute more ef-
fectually, than the cutting off Occasion
from them who seek Occasion of Michief
against us, by laying aside all unreasona-
ble Prejudices, and letting all those Heats
go out, and die, which have too long di-
vided us from one another; By heartily
joining in the Communion and Defence of
that established Church, which frequent
Experience hath shewn, to be the best and
most impregnable Bulwark of the Refor-
mation. These are such Methods, as
might give us reasonable Expectations, that
God will (and Oh that he may) continue
and multiply his Mercies towards us; by

SERM.
VIII.
~~~~~



# 324 *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.*

SER. M.

VIII.

lengthning out that most important Life of his Anointed, upon which the Security of what we already enjoy, and the Attainment of what we yet hope for, (and what indeed may we not hope from Him?) do (according to all human Prospects) in so great a measure depend. Thus would our *Jerusalem* be a City at Unity it self; and when it is so, it will soon be the Joy and Wonder of the whole Earth. Thus might our Church and Country hope to see the Accomplishment of that Prophetick Benediction of *Moses*, which the Deliverances of this Day will justify us in applying to our selves. *Happy art thou, O Israel! Who is like unto Thee? a People saved by the Lord, the Shield of thy Help, and the Sword of thy Excellency: Thine Enemies shall be found Liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high Places.* So be it to our *Israel*, O Lord, and let Them prosper that love us: But let the wicked Conspiracies of as many as have Evil-will at *Sion*, continue to be *like the untimely Fruit of a Woman, which never sees the Sun:* That, whatever Evils the  
Ma-

## *The Case of Mistaken Zeal.* 325

*Malice and Subtlety of the Devil or Man* SERM.  
*worketh against us being brought to nought,* VIII.  
*and by the Providence of thy Goodness*  
*utterly dispers'd, we thy Servants, being*  
*hurt by no Persecutions, may evermore*  
*give Thanks unto thee in thy holy Church,*  
*through Jesus Christ our Lord:*

*To whom with the Father and Holy  
Spirit, Three Persons and One God,  
be ascribed, as is most due, for the  
Blessing we this Morning are met  
to commemorate, and for all other  
his Mercies, all Honour and Glo-  
ry, Adoration and Thanksgiving,  
henceforth and for evermore. Amen.*





# SERMON IX.

Preach'd before the

## QUEEN,

NOVEM. 5. 1706.



DEUT. iv. 7, 8, 9.

*What Nation is there so great, who  
hath God so nigh unto them, as the  
Lord our God is in all Things that we  
call upon him for?*

*And what Nation is there so great, that  
hath Statutes and Judgments so righte-  
ous, as all this Law, which I set be-  
fore you this Day?*

*Only take heed to thy self, and keep thy  
Soul diligently, lest thou forget the  
Things which thine Eyes have seen,  
and lest they depart from thy Heart  
all the Days of thy Life; but teach  
them thy Sons, and thy Sons Sons.*



THE Main of this *Fifth Book*  
of *Moses* is a Recapitulation  
of several memorable Passa-  
ges, contained in the Other  
*Four*. But they are here repeated and  
enforced



enforced with all that Piety, and Wisdom, and tender Affection, which became so good a Governor. He, having in the Three foregoing Chapters brought to Remembrance many signal Instances of the Divine Favour, whereby God's People had been safely, and even miraculously, conducted to the Borders of the Promised Land, does here proceed to admonish them, what Effect it was expected those Mercies should produce. In my Text particularly, he represents both their Privilege and their Duty, in Terms so significant and comprehensive, as were exceeding proper to engage the Attention of *Israel* at that Time. And (Blessed be the Goodness of the same gracious God) they are a Subject of Meditation no less seasonable at This Time: On a Day, that ministers so ample and so manifold Matter of Thanks and Joy, to all the Members, and all the Lovers of Our *Israel*.

PERMIT me therefore to shew as well Ours, as *Israel's* Part in them, by making some few Remarks upon the Words; *First*, With regard to their Original Occasion and Meaning; And *Then*, as they

SERM.  
IX.

are applicable to the present happy Circumstances of the *English* Church and Nation; Those Mercies more especially, which it is the Design of this solemn Assembly to commemorate.

THE Text, as hath been already intimated, does plainly consist of Two Parts. *Israel's* Advantage, and *Israel's* Duty consequent thereupon. The Former is declared at the *Seventh* and *Eighth*; The Latter at the *Ninth* Verse.

THEIR Advantage is Twofold. (1.) God's Readiness to hear and grant their Prayers, Express'd by being *nigh unto them in all Things that they called upon him for.* (2.) The Excellence of that Religion, in which they were instructed, meant by *having Statutes and Judgments so righteous, as all the Law, which Moses set before them.*

THEIR Duty is likewise said to be Twofold. (1.) The making These an effectual Motive to Thankfulness and Obedience; *Only take heed to thy self, and keep thy Soul diligently, lest thou forget the Things which thine Eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy Heart all the Days of thy Life.* (2.) Taking Care

Care to perpetuate the Memory of these S E R M.  
Mercies, by *teaching them their Sons,* IX.  
*and their Sons Sons.*

1. I begin with the *First* of *Israel's*  
Advantages. *The Having the Lord their* Ver. 7.  
*God nigh unto them in all Things that*  
*they called upon him for.*

THE Holy Scripture, which frequent-  
ly condescends to our Capacity by speak-  
ing of God, after the Manner of Men,  
hath done so in the Passage now before  
us. A Being by Nature Omnipresent  
cannot, in strict speaking, be capable of  
Local Distance or Approach. He there-  
fore, with regard to his Power and Ge-  
neral Providence, must needs be equally  
every where. But Finite Beings have  
their Presence, and Activity, limited to  
some determinate Space. Beyond this  
they are sometimes Unable and cannot,  
sometimes Unkind and will not, extend  
their Help. Now, in Allusion to These  
it is, that we read of God withdrawing  
from, or coming near to Men, by such a  
distinguishing Providence, as imports  
particular Favour and Affection. And,  
as the Misery of the Wicked, who are  
deprived of This, is described by God's  
 *bidding*



S E R M. *hiding himself from them, not being found*

IX. *of them, not answering or hearing them,*

*standing, and beholding them afar off,*

*and the like: So is the Security of the*

*Good, to whom it is vouchsafed, express'd*

*by his Eyes watching over them, his*

*Ears open to them, his Hand upholding*

*them, by standing by them, and in my*

*Text, being nigh unto them in all Things*

*that they call upon him for.*

You, I am sure, need not be told, how eminently *Israel* was honoured in this Respect, above any other People then in Being. The Manner of their Deliverance out of *Egypt*, and the wonderfully speedy Redresses they found from the numberless Difficulties that encounter'd them, are Evidences sufficiently known of God's peculiar Care and Kindness for them. And, whoever shall reflect at all upon the different Fortunes of that Nation; how inconsiderable their Beginnings were, how mighty and general the Opposition against them; and yet how prodigious and irresistible their Successes; must needs allow, that the Psalmist hath given the true Account of their Establishment and Increase, when declaring,

that

that it was God, who *drove out the Hea-* SERM.  
IX.  
*then, and planted Them in; That they*  
*gat not the Land in Possession through* Pfe. xlv.  
*their own Sword, neither was it their* 2, 3, 4.  
*own Arm that helped them; But His*  
*right Hand, and His Arm, and the*  
*Light of His Countenance, even because*  
*He had a Favour unto them.* So ex-  
ceeding beneficial to Themselves, so ma-  
nifest a Distinction between Them and All  
they had to contend with, was the *First*  
Advantage specified here, The constant  
Readiness of God to hear their Com-  
plaints, and to assert their Cause.

2. *NOR* was that Other Distinction  
less remarkable, *The having Statutes*  
*and Judgments so righteous, as all the*  
*Law that Moses set before them.* The  
Excellence of that Religion might easily  
be made appear in many more Instances,  
than the Time will suffer me to mention.  
I will therefore, as briefly as I can, re-  
duce my Thoughts upon this Subject to  
the Three following Heads.

I. Its informing them in the Know-  
ledge and Worship of the One True  
God. It gave them right and reverent  
Apprehensions of his Being and his Pro-  
vidence,



SERM.

IX.

vidence, of the Invisibilty and Unity of his Nature, and his sole Disposall of Events here below. It prescribed a Service of his own immediate Direction; and enforced their Compliance by Promises and Threatnings of such Temporal Good and Evil, as, by being heretofore erroneously ascribed to false imaginary Deities, was the very Ground and Support of all the Pagan Idolatry and Superstition. It induced such Ceremonies, as might at once carry significant Intimations of inward Purity, and stand for indelible Marks, whose Peculiar they were. It led them to, and prepared them for, Christ and the Mysteries of his Blessed Gospel, by such Emblems and Shadows of *better Things to come*, as the Corruptions of that Age would admit, and the Condition of that People render'd practicable and proper. And, Lastly, It required, as one indispensable Act of Obedience, that every Man should frequently meditate upon, diligently read, and be perfectly well versed in, the several Parts of this Law, which could be supposed at any Time to fall within the Compaſs of his Practice.



2. THE Virtues of Sobriety, Temperance, Chastity, and all the Moral Perfections reducible to That, which Divines use to distinguish *by the Duty to Our selves*, were provided for; Not only by those Precepts of the Decalogue relating to this Matter; (the Reason and Obligation whereof are universal and perpetual,) but also by several of the Ceremonial Institutions, particular to this People. The Frequency and Solemnity of their Fasts, The Prohibition of fundry Sorts of Meats, The Abstinence from Pleasures otherwise lawful and innocent, enjoin'd upon many Occasions, All tended to correct that Prone-ness to Luxury and Excess in sensual Enjoyments, so visible in, but withal so injurious to, the present corrupt State of Human Nature. All helped to beget a just Contempt and Detestation of that Licentiousness which sinks Men into Brutes, and yet had gained such Credit with the rest of the degenerate World, as even to be adopted into their Offices of Religion; And so to represent that their Duty, and their Glory, which was in truth the highest Aggravation of their Sin and Reproach.

S E R M.

IX.

3. ONCE

SERM.

IX.

3. Once more : The Excellence of this Religion deserves our particular Regard for the great Wisdom of its Civil Constitutions. The Measures directed to those in a governing or private Capacity, for impartial Distribution of Justice, for punishing, repairing, restraining, and even preventing of Wrongs, were admirably tempered for cherishing Peace, and Order, and good Understanding. The Precepts of Humanity, and Courtesy, and Compassion to all under any Disadvantage of Fortune and Condition, and the strict Engagements to mutual Assistance in any common Distress : The Treatment of Servants, of Criminals, of the Poor, the Fatherless, and the Widow, were nicely calculated for Kindness and Amity, and killing the Seeds of Oppression and Cruelty. The Sacredness of mutual Contracts, The Rules for Borrowing and Lending, The Years of Release and Jubilee, and the Unlawfulness of alienating Estates finally, These laid the Axe to the very Root of Avarice and Ambition. So that one may venture to say, No Scheme of Government hath exceeded This, in discountenancing a private and selfish, and encour-



encouraging a generous and truly publick S E R M.  
Spirit; in obliging Men to love and live IX.  
like Brethren, and uniting them in an ea-  
ger Zeal for the common Cause of their  
Country, and their God.

I cannot think Justice done to this  
*First* Head, till it be left upon You with  
One Reflection, to which the Words of  
my Text do naturally lead me. It is,  
That in the Two Advantages we have  
been treating of, the Greatness and pecu-  
liar Felicity of *Israel* did chiefly and pro-  
perly consist. For thus we find Each of  
them introduced, *What Nation is there*  
*so great that hath God so nigh unto*  
*them?* And again, *What Nation is there*  
*so great, that hath Statutes and Judg-*  
*ments so righteous?*

AND Great indeed they were in some  
Respects, of which I think no History af-  
fords a Parallel. A People, whose vast  
Increase and Power was not, like that of  
Other Nations, owing to Numbers of  
Foreign Growth, ingrafted upon the Ori-  
ginal Stock, but all Natural Branches  
springing from One and the same Root.  
A People, who, through various Re-  
volutions and differing Forms of Govern-  
ments



SER M. ment, preserved their Constitution still  
 IX. entire: Who made a noble Figure for  
 ~~~~~ Two thousand Years: Who survived  
 Three most potent Monarchies; and were
 not broken by the Fourth, till after Calamities and Devastations incomparably more dreadful, than any State besides was ever able to sustain.

'Tis true, their Affairs were not always prosperous; but when they were otherwise, God still appeared nigh unto them. The dismembring ten Parts of that Body at once, the long Captivity in strange Lands, and the frequent Disasters in their own, did, in the Nature of the Things, plainly tend to their Decay and utter Dissolution. But in the Event, What End did all these serve, so much as to render the special Providence over them, more conspicuous and astonishing? For, to What else can we ascribe those wonderful Recoveries of Strength, which, like Health to Patients given over for dead, no ordinary Means were adequate to, no Rules of Human Policy could account for? The Barbarities of their Adversaries retorted back in Vengeance and Ruin upon the Oppressors them-

verted into Means of their firmer Esta-
blishment, and more glorious Exaltation,
must needs have proceeded from the im-
mediate Hand of Him, who *takes the*
Crafty in their own Devices, and suffers
no Weapon formed against his Chosen to
prosper.

S E R M.

IX.

To these uncommon Consequences the
Righteousness of their Statutes and
Judgments did also greatly contribute.
Upon Them the Promises of Divine
Protection and Favour were suspended, so
that These, while observed, continued an
impregnable Defence. The Afflictions
sent for Neglect of These, by bringing
that People back to a better Sense, did at
the same Time bring back God's Readiness
to hear and help. The Wisdom of this
Law struck an Awe into Strangers, softened
their Enemies, and more than once recom-
mended them to such Indulgence from
Heathen Princes, as patronized their Cause,
and became the principal Instrument of
restoring the Peace of their Country, and
the Primitive Splendor of their Religi-
on. A Religion, which, by uniting both
their Interests and Affections, render'd
them so formidable Abroad, and so safe

at Home, that, if we may have Leave to judge from probable Circumstances, the *Romans* could not at last have effected their Overthrow; had not God, as a fatal Introduction to it, permitted a Zeal so bitter, and Factions so furious, to kindle and consume them Within, that the Rage of these did the Work of their Enemies Without; while by a prodigiously blind and barbarous Infatuation, they first divided from, and then engaged against, and destroyed one another.

2. HAVING thus shew'd *Israel's* Advantages, and how justly their Greatness is attributed to them; let me now pass to the Duties enforced from thence. Upon the first Branch whereof I shall not need to argue. For till, not only Scripture, but even common Sense be abandoned, we must remain persuaded, That all Appearances of an extraordinary Providence in Mens Favour require a Tribute of Glory and Thanks to God; That this Tribute is not duly and honestly paid, unless express'd by their Lives as well as their Lips: That it is indeed much more effectually express'd by their Lives, than by

by their Lips, and that the Latter is required, only in order to the Former.

SERM.

IX.

As little can I judge it necessary to prove, that the End of Religion in general is Obedience ; Or that the Piety and Virtue of its Professors ought to shine forth, in proportion to the Purity of their Principles, and the Perfection of their Knowledge. These are Remarks so obvious and evident, that every one here present, I take for granted, acquiesces in *Israel's* Obligation to that Part of the Command at the *Ninth* Verse, *Only take heed to thy self, and keep thy Soul diligently, lest thou forget the Things which thine Eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy Heart all the Days of thy Life.*

BUT it is possible, Some, who are satisfied in the Reasonableness of such Returns for present and personal Mercies, may not be equally clear in that other Command, of transmitting down the Remembrance of past Blessings, and continuing solemn Acknowledgments for them, among Generations yet unborn. If any such now hear me ; I shall hope, they will think the Equity of This Ordinance also

SERMON abundantly justified by the following Considerations.

IX.

1. THE Closeness of the Relation between Ancestors so blest'd, and the Descendants from them. For surely it is contrary to Reason, no less than to Nature and Blood, to look upon our Selves as unconcern'd in Their Fortunes of any kind, of whose Substance we are a Part, and from whom our very Life and Being are derived to us.

2. THE Condition of all publick Communities. Which is, that they do not die off like private Men, but continue in that Capacity the same, what Change soever may happen to the Individuals whereof they are compos'd. And herein the Body Civil resembles the Natural, for the Particles of That too undergo daily and hourly Alterations: And yet the Man in One Case, and the Society in the Other, is still to all Intents and Purposes One, from the first Moment of Existence, to that of final Dissolution. Consequently, all National Dangers and Deliverances do really affect every Member of that Nation, as Such; in how distant
a Suc-

before the Queen.

341

a Succession soever he may live from the Time of those publick Events. SERM.
IX.

3. BUT, *Thirdly*, Though such Events themselves be not, yet the Influences and beneficial Effects of them are, present to Posterity oftentimes, in so sensible a Manner, that they may in this Respect be very truly stiled Personal Blessings. Thus every *Israelite*, so long as that Dispensation endured, found his Account in the Mercies referr'd to by the Text. And therefore the Sons, and the Sons Sons, were obliged to all fitting Demonstrations of Gratitude, for the Deliverance out of the Bondage of *Egypt*, and the giving of so excellent a Law; No less than those Fathers, whose own Eyes had seen the Wonders of God at the *Red Sea*, and all the awful Pomp of his Majesty at Mount *Sinai*.

FOR such Reasons as these, we may fairly presume, God was pleased to institute lasting Memorials of his Goodness to that People. But, whether for these Reasons, or not, it ought to suffice us, That such Memorials were certainly of Divine Institution: That the Form and the End of them are Our Pattern; by

SERM.

IX.

being so contrived, as not only to publish the great Benefactor's Praises, but also to promote his true Religion: That the *Jewish* Rulers afterwards esteemed themselves not only allowed, but obliged, upon extraordinary Occasions, to ordain the like; without any positive and immediate Direction from Heaven in the Matter: That such, in particular, were the Feasts of *Purim*, and the Dedication; the Latter whereof our Blessed Lord vouchsafed to honour with his Presence. And sure we may have liberty to infer a Parity of good Reason, and good Acceptance with God, when publick and important Mercies are, in succeeding Ages, celebrated by solemn and religious Acknowledgments. Hence have the Wisdom and Piety of our Governors set a Mark of Distinction upon this Day. How very justly, I am now about to observe, by bringing home to our own Church and Nation, the Words of my Text, and the Principal of those Remarks, which I have hitherto been drawing from them.

I. WE sure were of all Mortals the most disingenuous and unworthy, did we
not

not evidently discern, and thankfully rejoice in, a lively Resemblance to *Israel*, in the Readiness of God to succour and protect us. No Period of Time, since Miracles have ceased, can produce more remarkable Instances of this Nature, than the *English* Church and Nation have been blest'd with, since rescued from the Bondage of their *Romish* Taskmasters. The Attempts to reduce us have been, not only so numerous and subtle, but so bloody, and barbarous, and base; as prove their pretended Conversions to be of a kind, altogether different from those laboured by St. *Paul*, and such as plainly seek not *Us* but *Ours*.

YET in the Design of This Day, they even out-did themselves. A Design so spiteful and unprovoked, so cruel in the Intention, so secret in the Contrivance, so long under Debate, so speedy in the Manner of Execution, and so dismal in its Consequences, as carried all the Marks of that Hell, where alone such a Monster could be engender'd. A notable Argument of their Charity to Mens Souls, who found out this new Fire for purging them! A Holy Zeal indeed, for

Bishop Andrews, Tortura Torti. p. 83. &c.

344 A SERMON preach'd

SERMON. King, Prince, Clergy, Nobility, and the
 IX. whole People Representative (all pretended to be in a State of Damnation) to be blown away into Eternity at once, without one Moment's Leisure for Repentance! An extraordinary Honour done to Religion, shamelessly to abuse that sacred Name, and prostitute its solemnest Ties of Oaths and Sacraments, to advance *Rome Christian*, by Measures so treacherous and inhuman, as the Principles of *Rome Heathen* would have rejected, with the utmost Indignation and Scorn!

Thuanus,
 Lib. 135.
 p. 2.

I WOULD not by any means, nor did our then injured Sovereign, undertake to charge all of that Persuasion, with a Part in, or even Approbation of, this unparallell'd Villany. Many, we charitably hope, are not so entirely at the Devotion of their intriguing Casuists, as by Their Sophistry to be argued out of the first and brightest Maxims of Morality and common Honesty. But, whether we can think so favourably of one celebrated Order among them, and the governing Part of their Church, let their own Conduct in this single Point determine. The first Attempt was to discredit, and, with

with their usual Modesty, deny the Fact. S E R M.
A Labour, which many concurrent Inti- IX.
mations from Abroad, but especially the
Circumstances of the Discovery, the
harden'd Gloryings of Some, and the un-
extorted * Confessions of Other Accom-
plices, did quickly then, and always
ought to, render unsuccessful. Beaten
from this Evasion, their Next was then
to *lament* it. But what did they la-
ment? The Wickedness or the Disap-
pointment of this Conspiracy? For they
have left us under just Suspense. Sus-
pense shall I say? Or rather, that they have
sufficiently explain'd themselves, by the
very kind Reception of Two † of the
Traitors at *Rome*, by the Preferment of
One in the Pope's own Court, and by
inserting Two others ‡ executed for it,
into the Jesuits Catalogue of *English*
Martyrs, invoking one of them among
their interceding Saints, and valuing the
Straw

* Of these Confessions see *Thuan. Lib. 135. Part. 2.*

‡ *Gerard, alias Everard* (before whom the Sacrament and Oath of Secrecy was taken) and *Greenwell, alias Testmond*, who confirm'd the before-scrupulous Conscience of *Bates*, Servant to *Catesby*, by assuring him, the Design was not only lawful, but meritorious. *Thuan. Lib. 135. part 2.*

† *Hall, alias Oldcorn, and Garnet.*

SERM.
IX.

Straw on which his Body lay, as a Relique of great Price? They who act so, put too much upon us, when requiring our Belief, that Abhorrence of the Guilt makes any Part of their Grief upon this Occasion. Till therefore they think fit to give some other sort of Testimonies; we must have Leave to suspect, that such Men condemn this Treason, as a true Popish Spirit does the Massacre of * *Paris*, for being done by Halves, and not answering its Purpose.

HAPPY however it is for Us, that One above, whose Judgment is always right, declared his Detestation of the impious Attempt, by detecting, and, as on this Day, utterly defeating it. Happy, that he hath ever since continued to hew the Snares of these Ungodly in Pieces. For I cannot think we do them any wrong, by apprehending the same Hand more or less concerned, in all the Miseries and Confusions of this Kingdom ever since. They appear but too manifestly never to have wanted the Will, though (God be prai-

* *Gabr. Naudé Considerations Politiques sur les Coups d'Etat.* From pag. 167, to 181.

praised) they have often wanted the Power, to embroil and enslave us. When they imagined themselves in Possession of That also, what Improvement they made of the Opportunity, by abusing the misguided Zeal of an unfortunate Prince, I delight not, and indeed I need not, to put you in Remembrance. Your selves both felt the Fear, and saw the Danger. Of which I now desire to make no other Use, than that of exciting your Thankfulness for the Deliverance. For, that the *Fifth of November* might shine with double Lustre, on It our Religious and Civil Rights began again to triumph over the Malice of their Subverters. This Restitution of Both, we owe, next under God, to the unwearied Toils and glorious Conduct of a Prince, whose Memory (if it were only upon that Account) ought to be very Dear to us. But when we add, that there too was laid the Foundation of our present Happiness, the Stability of Her Majesty's Throne, and the unparallell'd Blessings of Her Reign, What Honours can be too great for her Royal Predecessor's Name? What Distinc-

SERM. Distinctions too solemn for This so auspicious, so important Day ?

IX.

I AM under a Necessity of contracting my self upon so agreeable a Subject. But, by the Little said upon it, You, doubtless are convinced, what Right we have to the Words of *Moses* here, and that indeed they hardly come up to our Point. For I know not well, whether it might not look like a Diminution of his Mercies and peculiar Providence towards us, to say, that our *God is nigh in all we call upon him for* ; When, in Many Instances, he hath even prevented our Wishes, and in Most, very far surpass'd our Expectations.

2. WITH regard to *Israel's Second Advantage* we are beyond Comparison superior. For, how justly soever the Pre-eminence were ascribed to the *Jewish*, above any other Law then obtaining in the World, yet may we truly affirm with 2 Cor. iii. 10. St. Paul, that *what was then made glorious hath now no Glory, by reason of the Glory that excelleth*. Such is our indisputable Prerogative as Christians.

BUT, since it hath pleased God to permit, that even Christians should be miserably

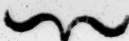
before the Queen.

349

rably corrupted and divided; We ought to esteem it our peculiar Felicity, that we are Members of a Church, of whose Faith and Practice God's written Word is the Rule; Of whose Interpretation of that Word, the Sense of the First and Purest Ages is the Standard; Whose Worship and Ceremonies are solemn without Preciseness, and decent without Superstition: Whose Offices are sound and prudent, apt and edifying; Whose Religion not only dares, but desires, to be seen without Disguise, and carefully examined by all its Professors. A Religion, that heartily embraces all the Counsel of God, but with a just Indignation rejects the additional Articles of Men; and will not submit to the Tyranny of Idolatry in Practice, and Contradictions in Belief, being imposed, as Terms necessary to Salvation. A Religion, so exactly calculated for the Perfection of all divine and human, moral and social, private and publick Virtues, that the Zealots of *Rome* have nothing truly Primitive and Christian, which We want; Nothing particular to Their Communion, which We are not better without: In plain

S E R M.

IX.



SERM.

IX.

plain *English*, Nothing which they stickle for converting us to, but newer or older Errors, Uncharitableness and Faction, Disloyalty and Slavery : Lastly, (which comes up closer to the Occasion of this Assembly,) a Religion, in Meekness and Innocence so like its Divine Author, that it will not allow us to take Sanctuary in those infamous Means for our own Preservation, which our Adversaries, without any Scruple or Remorse, make choice of for our Destruction.

ON these two Privileges then let us, after the Example of *Moses*, fix our Contemplation, and ground our Happiness. The Convenience of our Situation, The Benignity of our Climate, The various Productions of our Country, The Benefits of our Navigation, The Wealth of our People, The Wisdom of our Laws, The admirable Temper of our Constitution, The Terror of our Arms by Sea and Land, And the shining Graces of our Queen, These are glorious Advantages, and an unexampled Concurrence of Blessings. But let me notwithstanding crave leave to say, that,

before the Queen.

351

that, to ascribe our present Enjoyments, S E R M.
or our future Expectations, to Any or to IX.
All of These, is to stop too short. They
are indeed proper Instruments, and sub-
ordinate Causes, but the Original and
Efficacious Cause of all lies higher yet.
It is the Favourable Providence of God,
It is the Excellence of our Religion,
that constitute our true Greatness and
Glory, our Hope and Crown of Rejoic-
ing. For such is the mutual Connexi-
on and Dependence of these Two, that
to the Favour of God we owe the Pre-
servation of his Truth among us ; and
from steadfast Adherence to that Truth
we may promise our selves the same Fa-
vour and Protection, which hath put so
visible and so advantageous a Difference,
between Us and other Nations.

ONLY let that be Ours, I beseech you,
which is here commanded to be *Israel's*
Care: To adorn this Truth, and to an-
swer that Goodness of our Almighty Pro-
tector, by a Conversation suitable to
Both. Nor let us be wanting to That,
for which God hath done so much, in
all lawful and prudent Methods for se-
curing, increasing, and, if possible, per-
petuating

SERM.

IX.

petuating this our Glory : Especially, by a watchful Prevention of that unwearied and implacable Malice, which labours for Mischief from a Principle of Religion, and teaches our Ruin to be meritorious : That furious Zeal, which, when it cannot call down Fire from Heaven, is not ashamed to impregnate the Bowels of the Earth with it, thence to undermine, and scatter, and consume us. Above all, let no Divisions *within* (fomented industriously by them that are *without*) render us an uneasy and unthinking Prey. For, after so many Warnings and Experiments of an Enemy, subtle and restless, insinuating and bold, and always in perfect Agreement against our Faith and Constitution : Any Breach upon us, for want of a yet more United and Enlarged Strength, will deserve hereafter, not to be pitied as our Misfortune, but censured as our Folly and Reproach.

Oh! therefore that the past Blessings and Escapes, to which we are indebted for remaining hitherto a Reformed Church, and a Free Nation, may be so devoutly commemorated, and so religiously improved
by

before the Queen.

353

by us, that my Text may be answered S E R M.
in the Latter, as punctually as you have IX.
seen it is in the Former Branch! May the
inestimable Mercies we have received,
and the excellent Religion we profess,
be effectually taught *our Sons and our*
Sons Sons: And may the Lord, who
hath so signally been Our God, be
likewise Their God for ever and ever.
Amen.



A a

S E R M.



SERMON X.

The Common OBSTRUCTIONS OF
FAITH and a Good LIFE
CONSIDER'D.

PREACH'D in the
Chapel-Royal at St. JAMES'S.
November the 6th, 1709.



LUKE XXIV. 25.

*Then he said unto them, O Fools, and slow
of Heart, to believe all that the Pro-
phets have spoken!*



THESE Words make a part
of our Lord's Conversation
with two of his Disciples, in
their Passage to *Emmans*, on
the Day he rose from the Dead ; and do
con-

A SERMON preach'd, &c. 355

contain a Reproof of those Doubts, and SERM.
that Perplexity of Mind, which his Suffer- X.
ings and Death had created, and the Evi-
dences already given of his being risen
again, had not as yet removed. That
Incredulity is here upbraided, as an Ef-
fect of *Folly*, and *Slowness of Heart*.
Whereby cannot possibly be intended
any such Weakness, or natural Want of
Capacity, as should disable the Disci-
ples from apprehending the true Force of
Arguments, proper to prove his Resur-
rection. For this would have been Mat-
ter, not of Rebuke, but Pity; and must
have rendered all those Reasonings fruit-
less and absurd, which we find, in the fol-
lowing Part of this Discourse, employ'd
for their Conviction. It must therefore
certainly mean such Inconsideration, as
did not duly attend to the Testimonies
of them who had seen him; and parti-
cularly to those Predictions of the Pro-
phets, which alone might have sufficed
to let them see the Certainty, the Ne-
cessity indeed, of our Saviour's Resurrec-
tion. For thus much the Verses next
following manifestly import: *Ought not* Ver. 26.
Christ to have suffered these Things, and 27.

356 A SERMON preach'd

SERMON. to enter into his Glory? And, beginning at Moses, and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them, in all the Scriptures, the Things concerning himself.

THE Occasion of my Text being thus explained, I design to make this Two-fold Use of it.

I. *First*, I shall enquire, to what Causes the Unbelief of these Disciples may most probably be imputed. And from thence,

II. *Secondly*, I shall proceed to shew, what Obstructions and Indispositions of Mind it must be Our care to keep clear of; in order to believe, and practise those Things, which the Gospel requires from us.

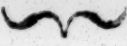
I. I begin with some Causes, to which the *Folly* of these Disciples, and their *Slowness to believe* the Predictions relating to this Matter, may most probably be imputed.

I. Now *First*, One of these Causes seems to be intimated, in that very significant Expression, *All that the Prophets* have

have spoken. My meaning is, that, al- SER M.
though the Disciples were not unac- X.
quainted with the Prophetick Writings, 
yet they did not attend to every Part of
these equally : Nor did they so consider
and compare them with each other,
as to discern their mutual Dependance,
and the exact Harmony of the whole
Scheme of Man's Redemption taken to-
gether.

THE Predictions concerning the *Messiah*
were of very different Sorts. Some had a
more immediate Regard to his humble
and afflicted, Others, to his triumphant
and glorified State. And These, to
Persons not nice in Observation, might,
nay, in Fact they did, appear to clash
and contradict each other. That all the
Triumphs and magnificent Characters of
a mighty Deliverer, and Universal King,
should belong to One, who expired un-
der so painful and ignominious a Death;
That he should be able to *save* so ma-
ny *Others*, who, when tauntingly called
upon to *come down from the Cross*, did
not (and therefore, it was supposed,
could not) *save himself* : We must al-
low to be wide Extremes ; at first View

SERMON. hard to be reconciled, as Properties be-
 X. longing to the same Person. And yet
 this Difficulty vanishes, when we recol-
 lect, that the *Captain of our Salvation*
was to be made perfect through Suffer-
ings; and that God hath very highly ex-
alted the Lord Jesus, because he hum-
bled himself, and became obedient unto
Death, yea, even unto the Death of
the Cross. The being *despised and*
rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows, and
acquainted with Grief, does then ap-
 prove itself, as essential a Part of the
Messiah's Character; as the having a
Name above every Name, and every
Knee in Heaven and Earth bowing to it.
 Each of these, in truth, had its proper
 Period. For Submission was ordained
 his Way to Sovereignty; and the Con-
 flict of enduring, to precede the Glories
 of his Conquest and Dominion. This is a
 Method so plainly chalked out, in the
 Old Testament; that, had not these Dis-
 ciples dwelt, (as is very natural,) chief-
 ly on the bright and most acceptable
 Part of the Images, by which Christ is
 there represented; the very Argument
 they mention, as most discouraging, had
 proved

proved an Antidote to their Despair. S E R M.
 For, take the Tenure of all the Predic- X.
 tions fairly, and the Reasoning will pro- 
 ceed just the contrary Way. *The Chief*
Priests and Rulers, it is true, *had deli-* Ver. 20, 21.
vered Jesus to be condemned to Death,
and had crucified him; but, had they
 not done so, the Prophecies could have
 found no due Accomplishment. And,
 upon these Terms only, might a rational
 Comparer of them *trust*, that *it was*,
 nay, infer, that it must needs be, *He*,
 who *should redeem Israel*.

2. A *Second* Cause of Disbelief in
 these Disciples was probably a Mis-
 construction of those very Prophecies,
 to which they did attend. And to this
 Two Things seem to have contributed:
 The One, the Temper and Condition of
 the *Jews* at that very Juncture of Time.
 A People always proud, and of all o-
 thers the most impatient of a foreign
 Yoke, would naturally give into that
 Sense of their own Scriptures, which
 flattered their Desires of Liberty, and of
 Conquest over the Enemies, who then
 held them in Subjection. And hence
 (by a Prejudice so common, that the A-

SERM.

X.

postles themselves were plainly infected with it) many Passages seem to have been interpreted of Present or Temporal, which were principally, if not wholly, meant of spiritual, or long distant Victories and Deliverances.

THE Other Thing, by which this Prejudice was favoured, is the Manner, wherein such Prophecies are express'd. Whatever is Spiritual, or belongs to a future State, cannot be otherwise represented to our Understandings, than by being beholden to Images and Figures, borrowed from Things, which we comprehend, and familiarly converse with. This is a Refuge, to which the very Nature of those Subjects drives us; And therefore the Gospel, with all its Simplicity and Plainness of Speech, submits very frequently to the Necessity of such Metaphors. But they were much more natural to the Style and Genius of the Prophets; They lived, and wrote, under a Dispensation full of Type and Shadow; and therefore they wrote agreeably to the Temper of their own Law, when the Veil of the Letter had some Mystical, and more noble Meaning couched

couched under it. And this is the Case S E R M.
of many Scriptures, where the Conquests X.
of Christ over his own and his People's
Enemies, the Enlargement of his Domi-
nion, and the perpetual Stability of his
Kingdom, are described.

IT is confess'd ; In the Predictions re-
lating to our Lord's Sufferings and
Death, we insist upon a plain and literal
Construction. And we have reason ; be-
cause these are Events, which affected his
Human Nature only, and are therefore
proportioned to a Human Comprehension.
But the Glories of his Exaltation and
Divine Nature, are neither present, nor
level to our Minds ; And therefore we
must not understand the Resemblances
describing those, strictly as they lie be-
fore us ; but as Expressions modelled and
ordered so, as we are able to conceive of
Matters out of sight, and so far above
us. The Want of this Distinction seems
to have fastned down the Thoughts of
these Apostles, to an entirely Temporal
Conquest and Kingdom. And they were
therefore *slow in believing Jesus* to be the
Messias, because his Persecution, and
Reproach, and Ignominious Death, were
manifestly

S E R M. manifestly inconsistent with the Notions
 X. they then had, of *all that the Prophets*
had spoken, upon this Occasion.

3. ANOTHER Obstruction to these Disciples, might be an Apprehension of the Impossibility of our Lord's rising again. Some Notions of the Soul's Immortality, and a future State, appear to have lain at the Bottom even of Natural Religion. Some Persuasion of a general Resurrection, at the last Day, the better and sounder Part of the *Jews* entertain'd: Both these Doctrines however were dark and confus'd; till brought to light by *Jesus* and his Gospel. But, that a Man should die, and return from the Grave in three Days, and live upon this Earth again in the same Body, was somewhat so astonishing and new, that we find it foretold, as the last and most irrefragable Evidence of our Lord's Messiahship. Such, as when so foretold, the Disciples are constantly observed not to have understood. And, though the Prophets of old had declared, that thus it should be; yet no Expectation of it now remained. Nor were they careful to apply those Predictions, to a Person, in Appearance for-

taken

faken of God, and given up entirely to the Will of his Murderers. Thus, by opposing their fond Reasonings to the Truth and Promises of Almighty God, they made His Power and Revelation stoop and bend, to their Own mean Apprehensions of Things: and were foolishly slow, in believing that to be done; of which they vainly thought, that it could not, or were not able to give themselves any account, how it should be done.

4. *THE Fourth and Last Cause* I shall mention, of this Folly and Slowness of Faith, might possibly have an Influence, as strong as any of the rest. I mean the deep and very tender Concern, these Disciples then lay under, for the Death and supposed Loss of their beloved Master and Friend. Every one, who hath taken any Pains at all to observe and know himself, must needs have found, how very differently he argues and judges, when under any violent Perturbation of Mind, from what he is wont to do, when free, and calm, and cool. The Understanding, at those unhappy Seasons, sees nothing in its true Colours and Proportions.

SERMON. tions. Every Object is changed and
 X. tintured by the false *Medium*, through
 which it passes; and all Degrees of Probability are magnified or lessened, according to the present Complexion of the Man, and the Passion, which sits supreme in his Soul.

THIS is the Case of Every vehement Impression. But Grief and Melancholy in particular, do, by a natural Effect, sink and damp the Spirits; fix upon the dark and dismal Side of the Matter, and keep us obstinately blind and deaf to all Appearances of Happiness and Comfort. Now such was the Condition of these Disciples; The Affection they bore to their Dearest Lord, would not suffer them before, to credit the Warnings he gave of his approaching Death. And now the Vehemence of their Surprise, and Sorrow for that Death, rendred them every whit as incapable of believing his Resurrection.

II. THUS much with regard to the Case of the Disciples themselves. I now proceed to my *Second* General Head: The Profit We should make of this Example,

ample, by taking occasion from hence to SERM.
observe, what are the Obstructions and X.
like Indispositions of Mind, which we
must keep clear of; in order to believe
and practise as we ought, those Things,
which the Gospel requires from us.

I. *First* then, LET the Defect of these
Disciples in not applying their Thoughts
to *All that the Prophets had spoken*, teach
us, of how great Advantage it will be,
to stand equally and sincerely disposed to
Every Branch of a Christian's Duty.
When Religion is considered with no
other View, but that of knowing and
submitting to All, that comes back'd with
rational and sufficient Evidence; it can
scarce happen, that a Man should long
continue, under any dangerous Error in
Judgment, or gross Enormity in Practice.
But if we bring Partiality, and Preju-
dice, and corrupt Interests along with us;
scarce any Command is so plain, but it
may be overlooked or evaded, scarce any
Opinion so extravagant, but it may be
entertained and espoused; scarce any
Wickedness so flagrant, but it is capable
of being indulged and abetted. Daily
Experience shews, how very discerning
and

SERM. and severe we are, in those Faults of
 X. Others, to which our own Temper and
 Circumstances give us no Inclination. But, are we not at the same Time as stupid, and positively blind, to some favourite Vices of our Own, against which the Scriptures are as express, and the Threatnings of God in no Degree less severe? The Covetous Person is abundantly convinced of the Heinousness of Luxury and Prodigality; And the Intemperate and Profuse as clearly sees the Sin and Deformity of Sordidness and Avarice. But charge each of these with his own proper Crime; And the One covers himself under the specious Pretences of Hospitality and Decent Living, Generous Contempt of the World, and *Taking no Thought for the Morrow*: While the Other as readily quotes you Texts, for Sobriety, Frugality, and provident Care of Families. And yet, whether these Men will suffer themselves to be made sensible of it, or no; Both of them are manifestly under the same
 1 Cor. vi. 9. 10. Condemnation. For St. *Paul* in one Breath peremptorily declares, that neither *Covetous*, nor *Extortioners*, nor *Riotous*,

nor

nor *Drunkards*, nor the *Effeminate and Unclean*, shall inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God.

S E R M.
X.
Eph. v. 5.

The Case is so very much alike in most other Instances ; that, generally speaking, the plainest Proof goes for nothing with Men prepossess'd against it ; and the slightest Shadow of a Reason hath all the Force of Demonstration, in Matters that Men are desirous should be true. In good earnest, and to speak freely : Can it be reasonably thought a Breach of Charity, to say, that Education, and Humour, and Convenience, and Fondness for a Party, and Respect of Persons, make up the Religion of too many ? And these are Cheats, wrought up to such a Nicety ; as not only to pass very often upon the World, but sometimes to impose upon the Man's own self. Inasmuch that, were every one, without Reserve or Disguise, to lay open the true Principles of his Conduct ; Not as he makes Profession of them to the World, but as he argues and determines upon them in his own Closet ; Good God ! how many wild and different Systems should we discover ? And how far distant would most

368 A SERMON *preach'd*

S E R M. most of them appear, from That, which
 X. yet All, who retain but the Form of
 Godliness, agree in appealing to, as their
 common Rule and Measure, the Gospel
 of the Lord Jesus? The Power at least
 of Religion is perfectly overthrown by
 such a partial Obedience. For, while
 we confine our Application to such In-
 stances, as are best accommodated to our
 Inclinations or Affairs; we do not sub-
 mit to the Authority of God, but make
 a new Law to our selves. A Law, which
 cannot profit them that are under it: For
 as, in my Text, that *Folly* and *Slowness*
of Heart could not escape Reproof, which
 narrowed the Disciples Faith, by not ta-
 king in *All* that the Prophets had spo-
 ken; So, neither in the Practical Part of
 our Duty, will any Reserves or Distinc-
 tions for Convenience be allowed; but
 upon that Condition only does Christ es-
 teem us his *Friends*, if *we* be careful to

Joh. xv. 14. *do whatsoever he commands us,*

2. But these Disciples were defective,
Secondly, in Misinterpreting those very
 Prophecies, to which they did attend.
 And this is a good Warning against mis-
 applying the Rule of our Actions. Cor-
 rupt

rupt Interests and Carnal Affections will S E R M.
 dispose us, not only to overlook and neg- X.
 lect, but, which is full as bad, to bend,
 and wrest, and rack the Holy Scriptures;
 till we make them seem at least to speak
 a Sense, that is for our purpose. We
 then see more or less in every Text, as
 it favours or discountenances the Preju-
 dices we have entertain'd; The Advan-
 tages we are in pursuit of; The Passions
 we are govern'd by, Or the Party we
 have given our selves up to. Now it
 should always be remembered, that the
 Word of God is that unalterable Stan-
 dard, by which all our Concerns must be
 weigh'd and tryed. By This we are to
 live here; and by This we are to stand
 or fall hereafter. And then those Things
 will be sure to rise in Judgment against
 us, which we saw, but would not see.
 Then those false Glosses will be detected
 and expos'd, which artful Hypocrites do
 now, with wicked Industry, obtrude up-
 on the Unwary, as Oracles of God; when
 his Word spoke no such Thing. It be-
 hoves us all therefore to deal Sincerely,
 and not to tamper with our Consciences,
 in a Case of such mighty Moment; where

SERM.

X.

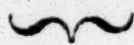
all Fraud will not fail one Day to be discovered, to the Deceiver's utter Confusion and everlasting Ruin. For God is especially concerned to vindicate the Honour of his Laws, from such outrageous Abuses, as insult him, above even the most open and impious Profanations. Even the most profligate Life, I say, betrays not a more provoking Contempt of Religion; than that vile Cunning, which perverts the Scripture, by making it an Engine of Villany, and Vice, and Faction. And it were much fairer and honester, in the Enemies of Virtue, quite to renounce this Holy Book; than only to make it the Tool of their own ungodly Lusts; and so carry on the Work of Hell, by a pretended Authority from Heaven.

2. BUT I observed before, that the Error of these Disciples was owing, not altogether to their own Prejudices; but in part, it is probable, to the Nature and Manner of the Prophetick Writings themselves. And *Another* useful Reflection to be made from hence, is, That, in order to a right Understanding of Scripture, Integrity alone will not suffice; but the Honesty

Honesty of the Intention must be sup-
 ported and guided by competent Know-
 ledge and Skill in the Judgment. The
 Proprieties of Language, The Customs
 of the Age and People then in being,
 The Genius of the Writer, The particu-
 lar Occasion and main Scope of each
 Book, The Connexion of it's several
 Parts, And the Suitableness of the Ap-
 plication we make to the Author's origi-
 nal Meaning and Design; All these are
 requisite to a thorough understanding of
 Scripture.

S E R M.

X.



BUT, can every vulgar Reader come
 provided with these Qualifications? No.
 Nor is it expected he should. And yet
 he ought to read, and may read very
 profitably, notwithstanding. For every
 Portion of that Blessed Book does not
 stand in need of so great Preparation.
 Some are so plain and easy; that no-
 thing, but perfect Stupidity, or Want of
 Attention, or Wilful Blindness, can mis-
 take them. And it is God's great Good-
 ness, and Man's great Happiness, that
 the most necessary Parts of Scripture are
 the most easy to be understood. In These
 therefore every Man may exercise him-

S E R M. self: And, for the Rest; if they be read
X. with due Reverence, Humility, and Modesty, God will enlighten Mens Minds, and enlarge their Knowledge, so far as He sees convenient. In some Things they may be assisted by Those, whom God hath appointed to watch over their Souls. The Divines of This Church, it is charitably to be presumed, will remember to whom they are accountable, and dare not; Or, if they durst, they have not any Temptation, that I know of, to mislead Men, in the Sense of these Oracles of the most High, the free and frequent Use whereof is not only indulged, but earnestly and daily recommended, to their Flocks. It is therefore most unjust to insinuate, as some Sons of Slander, (according to the modern Way of pouring all Manner of Contempt upon the Clergy,) of late have done; that the like Blame or Suspicion of Deceit lies against the Guides of Our Communion, as belongs to those of the Church of *Rome*. Her Tyranny proves her an unnatural Stepmother, by hiding from her Children the *Key of that Knowledge*, which alone can make them *wise unto Salvation*. But why, for God's sake.

fake, should We envy the Improvements of our Charge? We, who are acted by a different Principle; and We too, whom manifold Experience convinces, that Religion, and its Ministers, meet always with best Treatment, from the Persons, who most sincerely consider, and best understand them? But, while we could be glad, all the Lord's People were Prophets; we think our Advice should not be taken amiss, that They, who are not Prophets, would not pretend to be so. As knowing too, how much Religion and the Peace of the World suffer, by the vain Presumption of Men *wise in their own Conceits*; who are not content themselves, nor will allow Others, to *think soberly, and as they ought to think*. We acknowledge some Subjects too sublime for our Comprehension; Such as ought to be approached with humble Wonder, and of which Men may with more Safety choose to continue meekly ignorant, than hazard their Virtue, and the Scandal of their Brethren, by a bold, and troublesome, and always fruitless, Curiosity. And This leads me to a *Third* Reflection,

S E R M. proper to the Case of these Disciples,
 X which is,

3. THAT the Declaration of God is a sufficient Ground of Faith, how unaccountable soever the Matter declared may otherwise be to us. The Disciples seem to have opposed to the Prophecies of Christ's Resurrection, the presumed Impossibility of the Thing. Which was putting the Matter upon a wrong Issue; and teaches us, what Measures should be taken, with regard to all the mysterious Points of the Christian Doctrine. Not that (according to the common, but ignorant Clamour) Reason is even Here to be excluded; but only kept to its proper Business. Now This is to examine the Credibility of the Testimony. An Enquiry, which Reason is not only qualified, but bound to make. But when the Testimony is approved, Reason hath done its Office; and all the Difficulties arising from the Nature of the Thing testified, are thenceforth to be placed to the Account of Faith. That God is Infinite, Omnipotent, and True; That He is greater, That He can do more, than any finite Mind can conceive; And that He

He will do all, which he hath declared S E R M.
 and foretold shall be done; These are X.
 Maxims readily assented to by Reason.
 When therefore, according to all the
 Rules of sober Interpretation, the ac-
 knowledged Word of God delivers Things,
to Us incomprehensible; Reason itself
requires, that we submit and give Credit
to them. In this Case They are Wise
indeed, who satisfy themselves with being
Wise, according to That which is written.
But They, who presume to intrude into
Secrets, which no Man hath seen, or can
see, while they profess themselves to be
very Wise, become very Fools.

4. *Lastly, THAT Grief, which bore*
down the Faith of these Disciples, should
awaken our Care to moderate and subdue
all our Passions in general. Alas! How
frail a Thing is Human Nature, when
we have in the Text so sensible a Proof,
that even They, who of all Mortals had
the greatest Advantages, when over-
power'd by These, were no more than
Common Men? When Passion gets
head, Presence of Mind is lost; The
Storm soon grows too loud, for Reason
or Religion to be heard; Our Actions

SER M. are irregular and violent; and such a
 N. Mist is cast before our Eyes, that we can
 no longer discern Decency, or Duty, or
 Truth. Thus the Sensual and Voluptu-
 ous are blind to the Reasonableness of
 Temperance, Self-denial, and Mortifi-
 cation; So are the Greedy and Ambiti-
 ous, to that of leaving all, and follow-
 ing Christ; The Angry and Revengeful
 can see no manner of Necessity for par-
 doning Injuries, and loving Enemies:
 Nor the Proud and Imperious, any Beau-
 ty at all in Meekness, Humility, and
 mutual Condescension. And yet the
 very Things, which to such Men are
 Foolishness, are in reality the truest and
 most perfect Wisdom. So necessary is it,
 that these *Superfluities of Naughtiness*
 (as St. James expresses himself) *should*
be put away; to make room for that
Word of God, which must be *engrafted*
 in their stead, before it can *save* our
Souls. For, till Religion be the Ruling
 Principle, we are not under the Law of
 Liberty; but in the very worst of all
 Bondage, Slaves to our Affections and
 Lusts. Let us labour therefore by all
 means to break this Chain asunder; if it

be but in order to qualify us for judging S E R M.
 and acting like Men. Truth asks no X
 more at our Hands, than that we will
 come to it cool and considerate. The
 more justly we think, the more of Ex-
 cellence we shall descry in every Branch
 of our Duty. Which is in truth designed
 to make us here in some Degree, what
 we hope to be in Perfection hereafter :
 Masters, I mean, of our Selves, even
 while we have Passions upon Earth; to
 prepare us for that Heaven, where they
 will give us no Disturbance; but all un-
 ruly Passions shall be swallowed up in
 Universal Charity; Endless and un-
 bounded Joy; the ravishing Contempla-
 tion, and the most ardent Love, of Fa-
 ther, Son, and Holy Ghost; Three Per-
 sons, and One God; To whom be Ho-
 nour and Praise, Adoration and Thank-
 giving, now and for evermore. *Amen.*





SERMON XI.

PREACH'D before the

QUEEN,

NOVEMBER 7. 1710.

Being a Day of Publick Thanksgiving.



2 COR. i. 9, 10, 11.

We had the Sentence of Death in our selves, that we should not trust in our selves, but in God, which raiseth the Dead,

Who delivered us from so great a Death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust, that he will yet deliver us.

You also helping together by Prayer for us, that for the Gift bestowed upon us by the means of many Persons, Thanks may be given by many, on our behalf.



THE Interests of Mankind, are so mingled, and mutually interwoven, that no single Person stands independent on the Rest. The natural Sins of our Dispositions,

A SERMON preach'd, &c. 379

positions, and the forming us into Socie-
ties, have ordered Matters so, that none
can, And the Precepts of Christianity,
have refined upon both these, by com-
manding, that none should think he can,
be truly happy or wretched alone. But
though we are directed in the general,
*to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and
to weep with them that weep;* Yet how
deep Impressions the Fortunes of Others
shall make, and how wide they shall
spread, must depend chiefly upon their
different Stations and Capacities in the
World. Where the Eminence of the
Character gives an universal Influence to
the Person, there all our Interests are cen-
tered in One Point. A Point, which
cannot be touched, though never so ten-
derly, without imparting the Motion to
every Line within its Circle. Thus St.
Paul represents his Sufferings here, as a
common Concern to the whole Church
at *Corinth*. And thus whole Nations are
affected, not only *for*, but *with*, and *in*,
their valiant Defenders, and gracious
Princes. Their Dangers, and Cares, and
Deliverances are Ours; and We live and
die in Them. In order therefore to ex-
cite

SERMON,

XI.

380 A SERMON preach'd

SERM. cite in You that hear me, the Affections
 XI. proper for our present Circumstances; I
 thought the Passage, just now read, might
 not be unseasonable: In regard it very
 naturally suggests to our Minds, these
 following Considerations:

I. *First*, THE Use God intends we
 should make of great and long Calamities.

II. *Secondly*, THE slow and gradual
 Advances, even of those Deliverances,
 which he is fully determined to
 grant.

III. *Thirdly*, THE Ground of Trust
 in God, which Good Men may find,
 in such a Condition, as the Apostle
 here describes.

IV. And *Lastly*, THE Return proper
 to be made, when that Trust is answered
 and rewarded.

OF these briefly, in their Order.

I. THE First Thing I observe from
 hence, is, What Use God intends we
 should

before the Queen.

381

should make of great and long Calamities. 'Tis, that, when *we have the Sentence of Death in our selves*, that is, when Matters are driven to such an Extremity, as leaves no longer Hope from human and ordinary Succours; We should not even then give up all for lost, but *trust still in God, which raiseth the Dead.* VER. 9.

S E R M.

XI.

WHATEVER those Pressures of the Apostle were, to which this Passage refers, the Grievousness of them needs no other Proof, than that they here are stiled a *great Death*; and that his Rescue out of them is compared to that noblest Instance of Almighty Power, by which *God raiseth the Dead*. And such surprising Events, it seems evident, are sometimes necessary, to beget in us just Notions of God, and of our selves.

While Things glide on in a smooth and equal Course, the greater Part of them escape our very Notice: For there is, in the reflecting Faculty of our Minds, somewhat, that bears resemblance to the Organs of our Bodies: On which nothing makes an Impression, that we are conscious of, Except it alter the State they were in before. Thus all our Common Blessings

SERMON. Blessings of Ease and Health, The daily
 XI. Returns of Light and cherishing Heat,
 ~~~~~ The stated kindly Seasons of the Year,  
 And a thousand other most valuable  
 Mercies, are in a manner lost upon the  
 World, because long Familiarity hath  
 brought them into Contempt.

BUT, if it please God, in Judgment,  
 to inflict sharp Pains or a lingering Sick-  
 ness; if he make (as the Scripture terms  
 it) our *Heaven over us Iron, and our*  
*Earth Brass*; If he smite our Fields  
 with Blasting, or Poison our Air with  
 Pestilence; We soon lament the Loss of  
 That, which was held so cheap before,  
 and learn the Worth of our Blessings, by  
 the Want of them.

Thus a Mixture of Good and Evil is  
 an Advantage to Human Life. Because  
 in truth we need some such Variety; if  
 it were only to heighten our Relish, and  
 to recommend our Enjoyments the more  
 effectually to us.

BUT, when to This we add the dread-  
 ful Consequences of the Sin of Ingrati-  
 tude; and how apt we are to forget the  
 Author and Director of all these Events  
 to us: Religion will soon teach us, that

it is an Act of Kindness and Mercy in S E R M.  
God, to refresh and awaken our Memo-  
ries, and make us Wise, though at our  
own Expence. And this is never done  
to better Purpose, than by such Dangers  
and Calamities, as plainly prove an over-  
ruling Providence, by baffling the Wis-  
dom, and chastising the Vanity of self-  
conceited Men; when they illustrate the  
Glory of God with such Evidence, that  
they cannot but perceive and confess the  
Deliverance out of them *to be His Work.*

II. AND yet in such Deliverances, I  
observed, in the *Second Place*, God moves  
sometimes by very slow Steps. Thus,  
after St. Paul had escaped what he calls  
*so great a Death*; there were other Af-  
flictions, in which he felt the *Continu-*  
*ance* of God's Mercy; and more still be-  
hind, in which he hoped to find the  
*Completion* of it. *He hath delivered us,*  
*and doth deliver, and in Him we trust,*  
*that he will yet deliver us,* Ver. 10.

THE World is God's Own, and we  
must be content he should rule it accor-  
ding to his own Pleasure. It cannot  
therefore in reason be expected, that we  
should



SERMON. should fathom every Depth of Providence; or be able to trace it, through all its dark and intricate Passages. But, since God hath made some Discovery of his Ways and the Reasons of them; it were a Fault, not to follow him, with all due Modesty, so far as his own Revelations will conduct us.

XI.

I. Now many Instances in Scripture teach us, that Men do not only provoke, but prolong, their own Miseries. God tells his People, by the Prophet *Isaiah*,  
Ch. xviii. that he had *refined and chosen them, in the Furnace of Affliction*. When this is the Case, the purging off our Dross will determine the Time of our Stay in that Fire. The Physick of Sufferings must be suited to each Patient's Constitution: For, though sudden and acute Diseases may be check'd by a few strong Remedies; yet a tainted Blood, and inveterate ill Humours, require the whole Mass to be changed by a long Course. From whence it follows, that, so much as Men under Correction, contribute to their own Amendment; so much they quicken the kind Methods of Providence toward them.

BUT,

BUT, of all the Sins, that retard our Blessings, none seem to have a more malignant Influence, than Impatience and Ingratitude. This we find *Israel* often upbraided with; who soon forgot what had been done in *Egypt*, and at the *Red Sea*; and, upon every peevish Disgust were ready to fly in the Face of God, and of the Governor whom he had made the Instrument of their Happiness. Let me leave their Sin and Punishment with you in St. *Paul's* Words, and let us look well to it, that the like never be Our Case. These Men (says he.) were 1 Cor. x. Our Ensamples, and those Things are written for Our Admonition, to the Intent we should not tempt God, as They also tempted. Neither murmur Ye, as some of Them also murmured, and were destroyed of the Destroyer.

2. AGAIN. The Nature of that Dependence God requires from us, is such, as must surmount the Discouragements of Delays, and not be weary of waiting his good Leisure. It was *Abraham's* Commendation, that he stagger'd not at the most distant and unlikely Promises; And 2 Tim. ii. the Apostle compares afflicted Christians,

SERM.

XI.

to Soldiers and Husbandmen, whose Harvests and Triumphs cannot be come at, without much Labour, and Toil, and Blood. But, if our Tryals work Patience, and Patience have her perfect Work, our very Troubles and Temptations, another Apostle assures us, will at last be Matter of Profit and Joy to us.

jam. i. 2,  
2. 4.

3. BUT there is yet Another Thing fit to be attended to, under this Head. Which is, That God generally works by ordinary Means, and gives Success in Proportion to those Means. So that here his Providence is principally observable, in suggesting noble Enterprises, making important Discoveries, furnishing happy Opportunities, and prospering Mens own Endeavours in the Use of them. This is the usual Condition of Publick and National Concerns; Of a People that have subtle and potent Enemies to deal with; And in general, of all Events, wherein the settled Course of Causes and Effects is kept to. There are indeed some Seasons, for the Almighty Arm to exert it self in miraculous Interpositions; but We, who have no Warrant to depend upon Such, must tarry for a Blessing upon



on common Methods, be well pleased S E R M.  
that our Fortunes are deposited in so safe XI.  
a Hand; and, after St. *Paul's* Example,  
trust on still. The Ground of which  
Trust is my

III. *Third* General Head: AND this  
appears from the Text to have been two-  
fold.

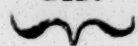
I. THE Experience of God's great  
Goodness to him heretofore: And,

2. THE Intercessions of his Fellow-  
Christians.

I. WE see how St. *Paul* is animated  
by the former Instances of God's Good-  
ness to him, from those Words, *Who*  
*delivered us from so great a Death, and*  
*doth deliver, in whom we trust, that he*  
*will yet deliver us.* Among Men, 'tis  
true, Favours already bestowed are look'd  
upon commonly, as a Discharge to any  
farther Expectations. The Narrowness  
of our Souls in part, and in part the  
Insufficiency of our Condition, forbid a  
perpetual Succession of Kindnesses to the  
same Persons; and render it necessary for  
Them, who cannot supply All that need,  
to scatter Benefits among so many the

SERM.

XI.



More, by distributing sparingly to Each in particular. But it is far otherwise with that Heavenly Benefactor, whose Power is infinite; and whose Goodness no more knows any Bounds than his Power. He sees the Wants of all his Servants, without Distraction or Perplexity, and relieves them all without Difficulty, and *gives liberally without upbraiding*. From Him One Mercy received is a sure Pledge of a Second, of Many, of Greater, of Better to follow; Provided always, we be careful not to obstruct the Course of that Bounty, which is ever overflowing, ever diffusing it self, out of a Source that cannot be exhausted, and a Disposition that cannot be weary of doing Good.

ver. 11.

2. AND yet to This we find another Ground of Trust added, in that Clause, *You also helping together by Prayer for us*. What could make a more agreeable Subject for the Intercessions of the Church, than the Preservation of an Apostle, so eminently zealous and useful? In proportion, We also may reasonably conclude, that, when Blessings of great and general Importance, to the Honour

Honour of God, the Advancement of SERM.  
his Truth, and the Publick Good, are XI.  
the Matter of our Devotion ; When the  
Solemnity of those Devotions, the Num-  
bers, the Importunity, and the Piety of  
those who offer them, happily meet  
together ; These will have no Denial,  
They do even, *δυσωπαῖν τὸ Θεόν*, ( as St.  
*Chrysostom* speaks, ) perfectly vanquish a  
good-natur'd Deity, and ( allow me to  
express my self after the Manner of  
Men ) as it were, weary him at last into  
a Compliance. If these Phrases carry  
a Sound, somewhat harsh and bold ; let  
it serve for my Excuse, that the best  
Fathers of the Church have thought  
their Hardiness in using them abundantly  
warranted, by that eminent Parable of the  
*importunate Widow* ; wherein our Blef- Luke xviii.  
sed Saviour at once recommends the  
Perseverance, and sets forth the irresisti-  
ble Prevalence, of our Prayers.

So considerable (and yet I doubt too  
little considered) is the Assistance, which  
Good Men contribute, by bearing a Part,  
neither the least, nor the least successful,  
of those Difficulties, wherein their Friends,



SERMON of the Publick, are involved. Let us

XI. obſerve now, *Laſtly,*

IV. THE Return proper to be made, when Successes of this Kind are obtained: Which is easy to be learnt, from that laſt Clause of my Text, *that for the Gift beſtowed upon us by the Means of many Perſons, Thanks may be given by many on our Behalf,* Ver. 11. The Deſign of which Paſſage is, certainly, to inſtruct us; that, as oft as Affairs or Perſons of a general Concern, have been (as they always ought to be) recommended to the peculiar Care and Mercy of God; the Thanks for a favourable Answer to ſuch Prayers ſhould not fail to be equally publick and ſolemn. The Neceſſity, the Equity, and the Decency of which Duty, I ſhould eſteem my ſelf obliged to explain; Were I not perſuaded, that You are here aſſembled in ſo juſt a Senſe of theſe Particulars, as renders ſuch Enlargement upon them needleſs. I therefore chooſe rather to draw toward a Conclusion, with ſome Reflections from the foregoing Heads; which may bring the Subſtance of them cloſer to our own Condition,

Condition, and to the happy Occasions SERM.  
of this Day's Solemnity. XI.

I. THE *First* could scarce be allowed  
a Place in this Application, were it, in  
the Nature of the Thing, possible, for  
*a tedious and bloody War*, not to be at- Collected for  
tended with *miserable Calamities*. But the Day.  
so it needs must be, to all who are en-  
gaged in it. For, how inevitably is eve-  
ry such People exposed, to Insults and  
Outrages, to perpetual Fears and Alarms,  
to insufferable Depredations and Difficul-  
ties in Trade, to the often repeated Ha-  
zards of Battle, to the variable Condi-  
tion of Alliances Abroad, to Stratagem,  
and Falshood, and delusive Overtures of  
Friendship, meant (like *Joab's Kiss* to  
*Amasa*) only to gain an Opportunity of  
striking home and sure: In a Word, to  
render the Hostility more successful, more  
fatal, to Them, who put themselves off  
their Guard, and are weak enough to be  
surprized by such Pretences.

THESE are but some of the Miseries  
that a long War imports from afar: But  
there are Others of the Growth of the  
Country, which sadly enflame the Rec-  
koning at Home. The lamentable Effu-

SERM.

XI.

tion of the Blood of our Brethren and Fellow-Subjects, The Numbers of Widows and Orphans, the Discouragement and Decay of Commerce, caused by it, entail Grief and Poverty upon Private Families: And the Publick suffers many ways to a very great Degree. But why should I enter now upon an unseasonable Mention of These? Let Us of this Nation rather bless and magnify the good Providence of Almighty God, and under Him the Vigilance, and Wisdom, and Temper of our Governors, which have preserved us from so many of the dire Effects of a long War; that, Those excepted, which are in a manner unavoidable, We learn the Rest to be the Consequences of it, rather by History, than by Experience; And Several of them, much more from our Enemies Sufferings than our Own!

2. BUT, in regard the Duration of such Evils was, under my *Second* Head, proved, in some Measure, to depend upon the Sufferers themselves; Let it, I beseech you, be every one's Care, to do His Part in shortening the Remainder of Ours. And, to make the Triumphs of this



this Festival truly glorious, and the De-  
votions of it truly pious and acceptable,  
let us, with our Praise, offer up our Re-  
pentance too. And, Oh! that our Luxury  
and Profusion, our Debauchery and Ir-  
religion, our Neglect of God's Worship,  
and Profanations of his Name and Word,  
may from this Instant cease to separate  
between Us and that Mercy, which these  
Provocations cannot but obstruct and sus-  
pend! May those Divisions and Animo-  
sities too, those unreasonable Partialities,  
and that bitter Zeal, which cannot but  
weaken any Common Interest, no longer  
give our Common Foe the Satisfaction of  
seeing Us turn our Artillery upon Each  
Other! A vain Satisfaction, even That:  
For, as we have hitherto, So, I make no  
doubt, we always shall convince him to  
his Cost, that the most Opposite, in O-  
ther Regards, are all inseparably united  
against Him: But still a Satisfaction,  
which every true *Britain* is concerned to  
take away the very Appearance and Co-  
lour of encouraging; by contributing his  
utmost to render our *Jerusalem a City at*  
*perfect Unity in itself.*

S E R M.

XI.



SERM. 3. How firm, and full of Assurance  
 XI. might (upon these Terms) be that Trust  
 in God, which he hath allowed us to  
 imitate *St. Paul* in, upon those very  
 Grounds, which compos'd my *Third*  
 Particular?

THE Time will not suffer me to say,  
 how many Instances of Former Blessings  
 will bear out our Expectations of More  
 and Greater. Not at present to insist up-  
 on That so lately commemorated, but ne-  
 ver-to-be-forgotten Deliverance, wrought  
 by our late Prince of immortal Memory,  
 which laid the Foundation of our many  
 subsequent Mercies: What an amazing  
 Succession of Victories hath adorned this  
 most Auspicious Reign, than which none  
 ever gave a People more Reason to wish,  
 that it were possible for it not to end,  
 but with the World it self? They, who  
 compare antient and modern *France*, will,  
 I think, be obliged to allow, That,  
 though our Arms have not yet penetra-  
 ted so far into the Enemies Country, as  
 at some Times heretofore; yet the *Brit-  
 ish* Valour hath in no Age more nobly  
 distinguish'd it self; nor was at any Time  
 a firmer Support to Our Friends, or a  
 juster

*before the Queen.*

325

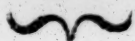
juster Terror to all that encountred it. S E R M.  
And, can we recollect those memorable XI.  
Days, that will transmit to all Posterity  
the matchless Renown of our victorious  
Generals? The Laurels gathered at *Blen-*  
*heim* and *Ramillies*, *Oudenard* and *Bla-*  
*reguies*? Can we see so many boasted  
Fortifications won, so great a Part of the  
Spoils and Armour, in which the strong  
Man trusted, wrested out of his Hands?  
Can we this Day rejoice, that the Disas-  
ters of *Almanza*, are not only retrieved,  
but amply revenged at *Almanira* and  
*Saragossa*? Can we, I say, look back on  
these Events, and doubt the good Will  
of that Power, which directed them to  
us? After so many Experiments of the  
Divine Bounty and Favour, if the Mea-  
sure of our Happiness be not yet full;  
What so rational Account can be given  
of that Delay, as the Want, not of In-  
clination on the Giver's Part, not any  
Want of Ability or Application on the  
Part of his Instruments: But the too ma-  
nifest Want of Qualifications on our Own  
Part; who, it seems, are not ripe for,  
and fitted to receive it?

How-



SERM.

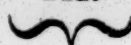
XI.



General  
Sermon.

HOWEVER, for those farther Accessions of Favour, We, with St. *Paul*, encourage our selves to hope, from those Prayers, which have constantly attended our Forces to the Field, and as constantly brought them back with some just Ground of Thanksgiving. Those Prayers had not been vain; though followed with no other Effect, than That of preserving our Country from being the Seat of War; Which is but another Name, for a Scene of Desolation and Violence, Barbarity, and Blood. But God hath done much more in our Behalf; He hath covered the Heads of our Leaders in Battle: And raised up many Glories of their Age and Nation, of a Genius Superior to all Danger and Difficulty. To One of these gallant Men so welcome, and indeed so surprising, a Part of this Solemnity is owing; That Silence to Day were injurious to his Merit. And yet I am apprehensive, it will be thought, Another, in my Place, might with more Decency, enlarge upon his Praise. I therefore restrain my self, and pass on to observe this farther Instance of our Heavenly Defender's Bounty; That, while

We

we were preparing to pay this Debt of S E R M.  
Thanks, he hath been pleased to swell XI.  
the Account, by Closing the Year with  Reduction  
a fresh Advantage nearer Home. of Aire.

SURELY we cannot consider these Events, as Christians, without allowing the Prayers of the Church a Part in them: Nor as good and grateful Subjects, without acknowledging our Obligations to that shining Ornament of it; whose Exemplary Piety and Devotion prove, that neither the Splendor of any Thing that is Great, nor the Conceit of any Thing that is Good, in the Best and Highest of the Sons of Men, have tempted Her to neglect those humble Prostrations due at the Throne of Grace, on which Her Great Original, the only Arbitrator between contending Princes, and the Giver of all Victory, sits.

AND indeed a thorough Persuasion, that to Him the whole of our Success is owing, is the single Principle, that can acquit such Festivals as this, of Pompous Hypocrisy, and even mocking the Divine Majesty: This is the only rational Inducement to improve our past, and to invite future Favours, by bringing forth

SER M. forth such Fruits of Obedience, as an  
 XI. Holy God may delight to cultivate and  
 ~~~~~ bless. And assuredly, Those in the End  
 will approve themselves the best Patriots,
 no less than the best Christians; Whose
 active Promotion of Piety and Virtue,
 Whose Justice and Charity to all Men,
 Whose Meekness of Temper, and peace-
 able Behaviour to the Ignorant, the Mis-
 taken, and the Otherwise minded; Whose
 affectionate Zeal for Her Majesty's Ho-
 nour and Service, and Whose Resolution
 and Readiness to unite in all Measures
 proper for supporting our common Cause,
 shall most eminently distinguish them-
 selves.

BUT why do I say Our Cause, when,
 were all of us thus disposed, God would
 not fail to make it his Own? We should
 soon see that Queen the Glory and Um-
 pire of all *Europe*, who is already, so
 evidently, entire Mistress of the Hearts of
 all her own People. Soon should we find
 that Haughty Insulter of Treaties, in
 very good earnest, seek and court that
 Friendship, which he hath hitherto ask-
 ed, for mere Stratagem and Amusement;
 And the same benign Providence, which
 hath

hath already wrought so many Works in SERM.
us, would ordain for us, that Peace, for XI.
which we have fought and prayed so earnestly, and we hope are now advancing nearer up to. A Peace, that may be safe, advantageous, and honourable; a Security to Us, our Allies, and our Posterity; As durable as this World can admit; and both an Emblem and an Introduction to that Peace in a better World, Which no Man taketh from Them, who, being delivered out of the Hands of their Enemies, Serve God in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of their Life.

*Now to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
three Persons, and one God, be all
Honour and Glory, Adoration and
Thanksgiving, henceforth and for
evermore. Amen.*



SERMON XII.

T H E

SIN *and* FOLLY

O F

Immoderate CAREFULNESS,

Preach'd before the

QUEEN,

Nov. 2. 1712.



M A T T. vi. 34.

Take therefore no Thought for the Morrow: For the Morrow shall take Thought for the Things of itself. Sufficient unto the Day, is the Evil thereof.



THESE Words conclude our Lord's admirable Reasonings, against that immoderate Affection and Care for the Conveniencies of Life, which find so many plausible

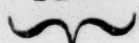
A SERMON preach'd, &c. 401

plausible Pretences to engage and engross SERM.
XII.
our Thoughts and Endeavours. The Danger, the Needfulness, the Vanity, the Impiety whereof, being abundantly exposed in some Passages before; The *Thirty third* Verse regulates those Desires, by enjoining Men to make *the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness* their principal Aim and Concern; and to depend upon His Providence for the Rest; as the Shortest, the Surest Method, of having all their Wants properly supplied. Then, in my Text, we are once more forbidden to indulge any anxious Thoughts of this kind; as not only Superfluous, but Vexatious too; by rendring Life a Burden, greater than it was ever intended to be, and making Men become their own Tormentors. This is the true Importance of the Words, which will be most effectually considered in the following Order.

- I. *First*, By enquiring into the Sense of these Two Expressions, *taking Thought*, and *the Morrow*.

D d

II. *Se-*



A SERMON preach'd

II. *Secondly*, By pointing out some Sorts of People, who are manifestly guilty of a Behaviour and Temper, contrary to this Command, And,

III. *Lastly*, By enforcing the Reasons against such Thoughtfulness. Which are, that, *The Morrow shall take Thought for the Things of itself*; and, that, *Sufficient unto the Day is the Evil thereof*.

I. To begin with the *First* of these.

THE Original Word, which we translate by *taking Thought*, is by no Means applied to every kind of *Thinking*, but to be understood of such Sollicitous and Intense Degrees of it, as rends and puts the Mind upon a Rack; distracts its Counsels, confounds its Measures, and, instead of coming to any steady Resolution, holds the Man in Perplexity and painful Suspense. St. *Luke*, in a Text parallel to This, where We read, *Be ye not of doubtful Mind*, makes use of a Metaphor, taken from those Meteors, which have no Weight or Fastening; but
are

Meteors.
Zell.
Luke xii.
29.

are continually in Motion, floating about S E R M.
through the liquid Air, and driven to XII.
this or that Quarter of the Heavens,
with every Blast and Shifting of the
Wind. Such are the restless and unfet-
tled Circumstances, The various Projects
and Counter-Projects, The amazing
Doubts and Diffidences, of All, who
let go their Hold on a Wise and Regular
Providence, and lean to their own Con-
trivance and Foresight. They leave
themselves no firm Support or last Res-
source, but are carried backward and
forward by the Vanity of their own
Imaginations; and always starting some
fresh, and crude, and inconsistent Scheme;
whereby to furnish their present supposed
Occasions, or to retrieve their past Disap-
pointments, or to raise and establish their
future Fortunes in the World.

2. FOR thus also, *Secondly*, by *The
Morrow* is meant here, not precisely the
next Day following, but, at large, all
Time distant and yet to come. Which
because we cannot, with any Degree of
Certainty, promise to our Selves, and
must needs be able to know Little or No-
thing of; *Taking Thought for the Mor-*

SERM.

XII.

now is no other, than confounding our selves with fantastical Hopes, and Fears, and Cares, of Things, which may befall us hereafter: Thus letting all the Good Fortune slip through our Fingers, by neglecting to enjoy our present Portion; and doubling all the Ill, by melancholy Anticipations of it.

SUCH then is the *Thought*, which my Text forbids us to *take*. A pensive Forecast, and perplexing Concern, about Matters Unnecessary, Uncertain, and Remote: Such as have yet no Being, no Place, except in those wild and ill-grounded Apprehensions, which the *Takers* of this *Thought* are ever forming to themselves concerning them.

II. I proceed now, in the *Second* Place, to point out some sorts of People, who are manifestly of a Disposition and Behaviour, contrary to this Command. And They, I believe you will grant me, are at least all These that follow.

I. *First*, Such as give themselves a great deal of Pains and Disquiet about the Superfluities of Life. And such, in truth, are by far the greater Part of Man-

Mankind. For, What is it else, that S E R M.
Covetousness, Ambition, and almost XII.
every Thing that the World calls Bu-
siness, do so eagerly pursue? Is it for
Food and Raiment, or for a cleanly
wholesome Dwelling only, that so many
nice Contrivances are set on Foot, so many
Hazards run, the Minds of so many
Men abandoned and enslaved, the com-
mon Rights invaded, the publick Peace
disturbed, and the World turned upside
down? Alas! The Want of These is ac-
countable but for a very small Part, in
Comparison either of our Desires, or of
the Mischiefs that arise from gratifying
them. But Splendor, and Pomp, and
Equipage, and Luxury, Swelling Titles,
numerous Dependents, and all the Dis-
tinctions of Quality, and Wealth, and
Power; These are the Views of Thought
and Carefulness; and what Condition so-
ever falls below some of These, is
thought scarce to deserve the Name of
Living.

NOW, as Nature and Convenience
have not found these Things necessary,
Reason and Prudence cannot direct us to
seek our Happiness in them. Much less

SERM.

XII.

could Religion; which is Reason most improved, and that best Wisdom, that descended from above. These teach us to set Bounds to our Appetites, and to bring them within the Compass of those Proportions, which our Occasions may very well be content with, and God hath given us leave to depend upon him for. His Character of *Father* is our Security for a Subsistence. But Children must not prescribe to Parents, what Measure shall be allotted them. And, though this Father, in dealing it out, will always have due Regard to the real Uses and Necessities of Life; yet hath he no where engaged himself for all those Ornaments, much less for all that Extravagance and Vanity in Living, which the Wantonness of Desire, the Folly of Custom, and a corrupt Way of Speaking and Reckoning, shall call, or shall imagine to be, necessary.

Thus, for the Purpose, an honest industrious good Christian may reasonably Hope and Believe, that God will enable him to maintain his Family: But it is no Article of Trust in Providence, that any of us shall be able to raise, or to perpetuate

uate our Family. We are reproached S E R M.
in this very Chapter, for entertaining a XII.
Suspicion so unworthy, as, that He, who Ver. 26, 30
sustains the Fowls of the Air, and clothes
the Grass of the Field, will suffer Us to
perish for Hunger or Nakedness. Thus
far we may be confident: Are we there-
fore to suppose this gives us any Title to
insist upon being *clothed in Purple and
fine Linen, and faring sumptuously eve-
ry Day?*

BUT what need other Arguments a-
gainst those Cares, which the common
Consent of Mankind, and the inward Re-
proaches of our own Minds, agree in
condemning as unreasonable? Were it
not so: Why should Men be ashamed to
acknowledge the boundless Extent of
their Views; why excuse their being in-
tent upon the World, and universally af-
fect to be thought moderate in their De-
sires, and easy to be satisfied with a Com-
petency? We ask our *daily Bread* pub-
lickly and boldly; We call in the Assis-
tance of our Brethren, and their Prayers,
for all the Necessities and Distresses of
Human Life; But None was ever yet
so impious and absurd, as to expose him-

SERM.
XII.

self, and affront Religion, by desiring the Prayers of any Congregation, for a *Person troubled in Mind*, for want of such an Estate, or Honour, or Preferment. So manifest Contradictions to their own Sense of Things are the Sollicitudes of worldly-minded Men; when they are ridiculous enough, most vehemently to pursue those Ends, which but very Few of them have the Confidence to own, and not One of them hath the Profaneness solemnly to pray for. But,

2. *Secondly*, Supposing the Objects of our Thoughtfulness to be in never so high a Degree necessary; yet all They are certainly Offenders against this Command, who allow themselves to engage in unlawful Measures for obtaining them. When therefore needy People have Resort to Force, or Falshood, to Treachery and Fraud; when Men supplant or oppress each other for Advantage; when human Laws are openly violated, or craftily eluded, or perversly wrested, to serve Purposes, contrary to the Design of all Law; when Forms and Niceties are made a Protection to vexatious Knavery; and Omitted Cases are laid hold on against plain

plain Equity and Honesty, good Conscience and common Sense: In short, when any Subtlety or Artifice to promote unfair Gain, or indirect Dealing, in any sort of Commerce or mutual Intercourse, intrenches upon the Right of our Neighbour, and deceives him to his Prejudice: All These are the Consequences of a *Thought for the Morrow*, not fit to be taken by us. They are directly sinful and unwarrantable; as transgressing those Rules of Right and Wrong, which were set as a Fence about every Man's Property. And (to come nearer the Scope of our Saviour's Discourse in this Chapter) they are so many Instances of Distrust in, or Defiance indeed to, that Providence, which governs and disposes all Events. For He, who attempts to support himself by wicked and unjust Methods, sells his Confidence in this Governor for a Morfel of Bread; and declares, that he means to stand upon his Own Bottom, by setting out such a Way, as the Blessing and Approbation of a Righteous and Holy God cannot possibly go along with him in.

3. *Thirdly*, Though a Man retain so strict a Regard to Justice, as never, for the

SERMON. the sake of Profit, to break in upon the

XII. the Laws of God or Man; yet, I conceive, he cannot be acquitted of the Sollicitude here forbidden, if his Management and Manner of Life be sordid and unbecoming. For there are certain Rules of Decency and Distinction, adapted to the different Ranks and Stations of Men: And These cannot be neglected, without lessening our selves, weakening our Authority, and drawing down Contempt upon the Character we ought to maintain.

'Tis true, by reducing Persons, once of Condition, to the last Extremities; Providence hath plainly dispensed with these Distinctions. It would favour too much of Delicacy and Pride, not to submit to the Severities of an indigent State, by stooping to any the meanest, the most laborious (provided always they be fair and honest) Remedies against it. But still, if there be any Choice left, the most Creditable and Becoming should ever be preferr'd; as well for giving Ease and doing Justice to our Selves, as for paying that Regard, which is always due to the reasonable Opinions and Customs of the World

MEAN

MEAN while, how blameable are those SERM.
penurious Wretches, who for the sake, XII.
not of Sustenance, but of a larger and
more speedy Increase, and to indulge the
Pleasure of being very rich, languish
out their Lives in a most miserable and
affected Poverty; Hard-hearted to their
Relations, Injurious to their own Per-
sons, Unthankful to God, Unprofitable
to the World, deservedly infamous, uni-
versally detested and despised, for a Par-
simony in the midst of Plenty, which
Nothing, short of the most deplorable
Want could excuse.

4. But, *Fourthly*, If the Decencies of
common Living have any Tie upon us,
when in Circumstances to observe them;
I am sure the Duties of Almsgiving and
all manner of pious and useful Libera-
lity, do bind us yet more strongly. And
therefore All they, who, for fear of di-
minishing their Substance, do forbear
to pay this Tribute to the Sovereign
Lord, in Proportions suitable to what
they have received from his bounti-
ful Hand, are some of those *Takers of*
Thought for the Morrow, who ought
by no means to be imitated by us. For
the

SERMON. the more effectual Prevention of such
 XII. ungodly Thrift, We find *Great Men*
 Luke xvi. are, in Scripture, filed *God's Stewards*;
 Mat. xxv. their Riches represented as *Talents*
 delivered to them in Trust: Detain-
 ing a Part of these from God and the
 Prov. iii. Poor, is said to be *Robbery*, and a *With-*
 27. *holding from our Neighbour his Due*.
 Expending these upon Uses of Piety
 Luke xii. and Charity, is termed *Providing our-*
 3. *selves Bags which wax not old, and lay-*
ing up Treasure in Heaven. And, to shew
 you how properly I take, in this Point,
 our Lord's Discourse here on the Love
 of the World, concluded by my Text,
 was introduced by an Exhortation to Cha-
 rity, at the *nineteenth* and following
 Verses. The whole of which is excel-
 lently fitted to silence that popular Ob-
 jection against the Exercise of this Vir-
 tue, which is so frequently urged, from the
 Regard we all ought to have for the Sub-
 sistence of our selves and our Families.
 And this it directly obviates, by repre-
 senting, how much all Creatures, how
 much more Men, how much more still
 Believers and Bountiful Men, are the
 Care of a watchful and tender Father in
 Heaven.

IT is not therefore the Prospect of S E R M.
heaping up great Estates, it is not the XII.
vain Ambition of ennobling his Blood,
and leaving a Name and Power to Them
who shall succeed him, that will bear any
Man out, for doing no Good in his Ge-
neration: No, nor even for delaying the
Good, which it becomes him to do, while
he lives; upon that frivolous, but usu-
ally false Pretence, of being in a Condi-
tion to do More Good, when he comes
to die. For the Wants of the Poor are
present and pressing, and therefore not
fit to be so much as put into the Balance
with the distant and imaginary Wants,
(which indeed scarce deserve any other
Name, than the Superfluities) of our
Friends, our Relations, or even our own
Selves.

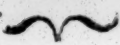
5. AGAIN, *Fifthly*, They, who keep
clear of all these irregular Practices, may
yet offend, by such a pensive and tor-
menting Distrust, as cannot well consist
with a firm Belief in the Wisdom and
Goodness of the Divine Providence:
Such importunate and corroding Cares,
as destroy a Man's Comfort, imbitter all
his Blessings, interrupt his Devotions, de-

SERM.

XII.

your his Time, and jostle out the more important Concern for a Better and Immortal State : Such as break our Spirits under Calamities and Disappointments, abandon us to black Thoughts, and cast away that Hope and Trust, which is the surest Anchor of the Soul, amidst the Waves and Storms of a troublesome and boisterous World. These are Excesses of Solitude, which strike at the Root of all Religion, whether Natural or Revealed. For even Natural Religion shews, that it is in the very Condition of a Creature, to be always depending. And Christianity is admirably fitted, to assure us of the excellent Goodness and wise Counsels of God ; and to convince us, that all our Affairs are, with infinitely more Safety , deposited in His Hands, than they could possibly have been left in our own.

6. ONE other Sort of *Taking Thought* there is, which I am sure falls very naturally under the Correction of my Text : A Sort, wherein all Times too much, but the Present does exceedingly abound : 'Theirs, I mean, who are perpetually disquieting Themselves and Others, about the

the Management and Issues of Affairs of S E R M.
State. These Men pretend, with won- XII.
derful Sagacity, to enter the Cabinets, 
may the Hearts of Princes; clearly to see
the secret Springs, and distinctly to fore-
tel the Consequences of Publick Coun-
sels; they erect new Schemes of dreadful
Revolutions, and read us a dismal Def-
tiny for many Years to come. And all
this with an Air so positive, and the Ap-
pearance of a Concern so passionate, as,
if the Men be in earnest, must, one
would think, abate a great deal of that
Easiness and Resignation of Mind, which
should ever result from a Remembrance
of God's ruling the World. But be that
between Him and their own Conscien-
ces.

Let me at least entreat these melanco-
ly Fore-boders, not rashly to scatter their
Jealousies and Fears, to the unnecessary a-
larming of Minds, generally too credu-
lous to the Prejudice of Authority. How
much more would they contribute to
their Own, and the Publick Peace, by *stu-*
*dy*ing to be quiet (as St. Paul commands,)
and to do their own Business? Contain-
ing their Thoughts, and Tongues, and
Pens,

SERMON. Pens, within their proper Sphere : And,
 XII. as every private Christian is unquestionably bound to do, leaving the Publick with Them, to whom God hath committed it. Prayers for his Assistance and Direction to our Superiors, Dutiful Remonstrances, (when aggrieved,) in fitting Time and Place, and every Thing agreeable to our respective Stations, are always becoming, and void of just Offence. But clamorous Complaints, poisonous Insinuations, bold Slanders, and sawcy Revilings, are Firebrands kindled in Hell.

YET, if there should be after all Any under so strong an Impulse, as makes them presume themselves called forth, as it were, to cry aloud, and bear their Testimony against their Governors : Let not this honest Caution be neglected by Such ; that, even when their Fervour is most impetuous, they would seriously weigh every Word and Intention, and and continually recollect, that these must be all brought to their Account, by that Searcher of Hearts, who sees the darkest Recesses of the Mind. He cannot be imposed upon, though unwary People may,

may, when Emulation or Envy, Prejudice or Passion, Inclination to a Party, or Impatience of Disappointment, are never so artfully varnished over, with the specious Colours of Publick Good, Love to our Country, or Zeal for Truth and Religion.

SERM.
XII.
~~~~~

THE Sum then of my *Second* Head is this ; That, the Persons intent upon Things not necessary, the unjust Providers even of those that are necessary, the sordid Managers, the uncharitable Savers, the Anxious in their own Private Concerns, and the discontented Busy-Bodies, and suspicious Prefagers in the Publick, do all of them transgress this Command of our Blessed Master, by *taking a Thought for the Morrow*, directly opposite to it. A Thought, dishonourable to that God, under whose wise Influence and kind Direction all Events are ; and inconsistent with that humble Resignation, and chearful Confidence in His Care for them, which is so shining a Grace, so essential an Ingredient, in the Character of a good Christian.

E c

I should

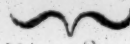
SERM.

XII.

I should now go on to my *Last* Head, were it not for a very perverse Interpretation of this Passage; by which the Slothful and Luxurious sometimes endeavour to support their Folly, and keep themselves in Countenance for *taking no Thought* indeed *for the Morrow*; after the most scandalous Manner, and in a Meaning, the very worst and most absurd, that these Words can possibly be abused to.

I think it needless to urge, upon this Occasion, the several Scriptures, which enjoin Labour, and Diligence, and a prudent honest Care; or Those, which represent these, as the Conditions, which must entitle us to the Blessing of God, upon our Persons and Families. It shall suffice to say, at present, that neither the Arguments used by our Lord in the foregoing Part of the Chapter, nor his Deduction from them in my Text, can, with any Colour of Reason, be made at all to serve so wicked a Purpose.

I. The foregoing Arguments cannot:  
For These all proceed upon the Bounty  
of

of God, to Creatures of less Value and lower Orders than our Selves. *The Lillies*, he tells us, *neither toil nor spin.* S E R M. XII.  ver. 28.

'Tis true: But then it is equally true, that they are not capable of Either. *The Fowls of the Air too, sow not, nor reap, nor gather into Barns:* ver. 26 But they do all they are able. They observe the Seasons of the Year with a most punctual Exactness; They build their Nests with wonderful Art and Industry; They fly about in quest of Food, and bring it home to their Broods, till those young Ones are fledged, and can seek it for themselves. So far are these Creatures from setting any Pattern of that Improvidence and Idleness, which covers the Sluggard with Rags, and abandons to Misery and Beggery, Them, who have a Right to expect a Subsistence at his Hands. Indeed the Only just Inference from the Instances used by our Saviour, is, That for Them, who can do nothing for themselves, God will provide entirely; And that for Others, who can do somewhat towards it, when they have discharged



SERM. Their Part, He will make up the  
 XII. Rest.

2. As little do the Words of my Text favour the Careless or the Extravagant, although they have been reasonably thought an Allusion to the *Israelites Manna* of old. That *Manna*, 'tis true, was not procured by the Labour of the People, but rained down from Heaven: Yet all they could contribute towards living upon it, they did. They went early in the Morning out of their Camp to gather it; they brought it to their Tents, and dressed it; And, on the sixth Day, they carried home a double Quantity, and laid up another Day's Proportion for the Sabbath, on which none fell. And all this was a Dispensation only for the Wilderness: For the  
 Exod. xvi.  
 Josh. v. 12. History takes notice, that on the very Morrow, after they had eaten of the Corn of *Canaan*, the *Manna* ceased.

WHAT now does all this prove? Even, that God's miraculous Supplies will not be wanting, when Ordinary Means forsake us; but that Those must not be depended upon, when These alone are  
 suf.

sufficient. Healthful Constitutions, S E R M.  
Strength to Labour, Wisdom to manage XII.  
and contrive, Happy Opportunities, Suc-  
cess upon our Endeavours, and the like,  
are, in the Nature of *Manna*, Gifts that  
come down from above. But Our em-  
ploying those Powers and Opportunities  
answers to the Diligence of the Gathe-  
rers and Preparers of that *Manna*. And  
We, like Them, may also, by an ho-  
nest and decent Frugality, provide for  
the *Sabbath* of Life; look forward, I  
mean, and lay up for that Portion of our  
Time, and Day of Rest, which Years,  
and Infirmities, or any other disabling  
Accident may require some Stock in  
Hand to lie in Readiness for. So far is  
this Passage, even when taken in this  
Light, for giving any Countenance to  
the Riotous, or the Negligent, who dis-  
charge all Thought at once, and live  
but for a Day.

III. SUFFER me now a few Words  
upon my *Third* and *Last* Particular, The  
Reason against all inordinate Careful-  
ness, Which turns upon *Two* Points;  
E e 3 *First,*

SER M. *First*, That it is Needless; and, *Secondly*, That it is Vexatious. To Each of these, very briefly.

I. THE Former I take to be contained in that Clause, *The Morrow shall take Thought for the Things of itself*. And indeed, Of how poor Significance are all the uneasy Forecastings of a troubled and worldly Mind? If we regard the Divine Providence; Will these alter any One of its Resolutions in our Favour? Will they not rather put a Bar to our Mercies, by the Dishonour reflected upon it, from our undutiful Despondencies? If we consider our own Powers; Will not these be in as good Condition to help us, upon the Spot, as at a Distance? Can we not determine more probably, and adjust our Measures more pertinently, when we see and feel our Exigencies; than, while we guess, and that but in the dark too, what may befall us hereafter? The Events we presage, may never come to pass. Those, which we dread as Evil, may prove a mighty Good to us. Or, if of evil Consequence, they will overtake



take us time enough. What need we S E R M.  
 be in such Haste to go out and meet XII.  
 them? And when they do come, they  
 may be Greater, they may be Less,  
 they may be any Thing otherwise than  
 we imagine they shall be. But be these  
 Changes, or our Mistakes about them,  
 as they will; Yet is not God *the same*?  
 The same Almighty, and Wise, and  
 Bountiful God, *Yesterday*, and *to Day*,  
*and for ever*? And, is he the God of  
 Us only? Is he not the God of our  
 Posterity also? Yes doubtless, of Them  
 also. They will be equally his Crea-  
 tures, his Children; and (if the Fault  
 be not their own) upon all Accounts  
 equally his Charge. What surer Sanc-  
 tuary therefore can we wish, what other  
 Security do we need, to compose the  
 Frettings of an anxious Breast, and lay  
 our Fears to Sleep, than this? That  
*He careth for us*; that *our Heavenly*  
*Father knows, what We and Ours have*  
*need of, even before we ask him*; and  
 that he never fails to make *all Things*  
*work together for Good to Them who love*  
 and serve, and put their Trust in *Him*.

1 Pet. v. 7.  
Mat. vi. 8.

Rom. viii.  
28.

SERM.  
XII.

2. THE Other Part of this Argument is grounded upon that unequal Addition of Trouble and Vexation, with which this Thoughtful Manner of Living will certainly incumber us. *Sufficient unto the Day is the Evil thereof.* The Meaning is, That God and Nature have cut out Work enough for Every Day; and therefore we do very ill, by bringing in unseasonable Cares, to lay upon the Present Time an heavier Burden, than fairly falls to its Share. The necessary Provision for Himself and his Dependents, is what the common Man finds hard enough to compass honestly and decently. And They, whom God hath blest with a more plentiful Income, how much soever they may appear to live at their Ease; Yet, if they be daily diligent to serve the Publick well, to administer Justice, and do good Offices among their Neighbours, to inspect their private Affairs, to instruct and educate their Children religiously, to order their Servants, regulate their Expences, distribute their Charities with Prudence and Distinction, and study

study by their Examples to promote SERM.  
Piety, and bring Virtue into Credit; XII.  
These Persons will find Business enough to keep them fully employed. So much in Truth there is for every Man, and such vast Encroachments does the World unavoidably make upon our Time; that They, who consider what a weighty Concern besides lies upon their Hands, would have great Reason to grudge so many precious Hours, did they run all to waste; and were not God so gracious, as to esteem himself well served by our necessary Application even to these Matters.

BUT still, You, whose happy Circumstances are least clogged, should frequently reflect, that Your larger Intervals of Leisure are indulged You, for Great and Noble Purposes. Not to be trifled away in Vanities and Diversions, much less to be consumed in Luxury and Vice; but by all Means to be improved, in attaining higher Degrees of Wisdom and Knowledge, in useful and exemplary Instances of Goodness, in the constant Returns of a regular Devotion, and in the delightful Contemplations of  
the



# 426 *A SERMON preach'd*

SERMON. the Excellence of the Christian Religion. One Beauty whereof my Text, and this Discourse upon it, have been all this while setting before you, by shewing, how admirably the Ease of Mankind is consulted by our Blessed Lord's Command here, utterly to dismiss all those melancholy Fears and tormenting Prelages, which are wont to depress our Spirits, and confound our Minds, more than the real Necessities and Afflictions of Human Life.

IF then our Days be bitter, and our Thoughts disturbed, let us remember, Who it is that makes them so. Not God, who disallows such Carefulness; Not Nature, which requires it not of us; But We our selves, who refuse our own Comforts, and will have a Misery, which belongs not to Us. The Choice and Use of proper Means is Our Part; The Issue and Success of These is God's. The former is an entertaining and a serviceable Care; That therefore is expected and commended. The Latter is a perplexing and a fruitless Care; This therefore is discouraged and forbidden. The former promotes Our  
Duty

*before the Queen.*

427

Duty and Salvation ; The Latter ob-  
structs Both ; and so would make us  
wretched in Both Worlds. Shall we not  
then labour to be easy here, when that  
is in order to be happy hereafter ? The  
Way to Each lies open ; and Each may  
be our Portion, if we will resolve to  
rescue our selves, as much as may be,  
from the Distractions and Incumbrances  
of this mortal State. Let us then conse-  
crate our Cares to God, by casting them  
upon Him ; and carry on our Thoughts  
to That other Morrow, which alone de-  
serves them all, but which alone hath too  
little taken for it : Even that glorious  
Day, which after we have slept the Night  
of Death, shall break forth, and awake  
us to Life Everlasting. Of this God  
grant us all to be joyful Partakers, for  
his Mercy's sake in *Jesus* the Beloved.  
To whom with the Father and the Ho-  
ly Spirit, Three Persons and one God,  
be all Honour and Glory, Thanksgiving  
and Obedience, now and for evermore.

*Amen.*

*F I N I S.*

Printed by SAM. ARIS.



*BOOKS printed for and sold by* THOMAS  
ASTLEY, *at the Dolphin and Crown in*  
St. Paul's Church-Yard.



THE Truth and Excellence of the Christian Religion asserted: Against Jews, Infidels and Hereticks. In Sixteen Sermons, preached at the Lecture founded by the Honourable Robert Boyle Esq; for the Years 1701, 1702. Wherein is shewn, 1. That the Evidence for this Religion is the most unexceptionable: 2. That it establishes and perfects the Law: 3. Makes the clearest Discoveries of a Future State: And, 4. Accomplishes the Prophecies of the Old Testament. 5. That the Belief of its Doctrines is reasonable: 6. The Obedience required to its Precepts practicable: 7. The Wisdom of the Gospel above any other Religious Institution: And, 8. It's Divine Authority prov'd from the successful Propagation of it. By George Stanhope, D.D. Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty. 4to. Price 7s. 6d.

The Sacred Interpreter: Or, a Practical Introduction towards a Beneficial Reading, and a Thorough Understanding of the Holy Bible: Containing, I. A faithful History of the four Antient Monarchies, (the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman,) absolutely necessary for the Knowledge of the Condition of the Jewish People. II. A General View of the State of the Jewish Church, to the Destruction of Jerusalem. III. Remarks on the Pentateuch, and the Prophets in the OLD TESTAMENT, and on the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles in the NEW; shewing the Design and chief Scope of each Book. IV. An exact Chronology of the Holy Scriptures, taken from Archbishop Usher and Mr. Archdeacon Echard. V. A Dissertation upon Revealed Religion, and an Account of those Divines who have defended it. VI. Difficult Texts of Scripture explained, with a Recital of such  
Sacred



*BOOKS printed for T. ASTLEY.*

Sacred Mysteries as ought not to be made the Subject of human Enquiry. Likewise the several Parts of the Holy Land are compared with the Accounts given thereof by modern Travellers: The whole designed to render the Study of the Holy Scriptures more easy and instructive. By David Collyer, late Vicar of Great Coxwell, Berks. In Two Volumes, 8vo. Price 10s.

An Enquiry into the Nature and Place of Hell: Shewing, I. The Reasonableness of a future State. II. The Punishments of the next Life. III. The several Opinions concerning the Place of Hell. IV. That the Fire of Hell is not metaphorical, but real. V. The Improbability of that Fire's being in or about the Centre of the Earth. VI. The Probability of the Sun's being the Local Hell; with Reasons for this Conjecture, and the Objections from Atheism, Philosophy, and the Holy Scriptures, answer'd. By Tobias Swinden, M. A. late Rector of Cuxton in Kent. The Second Edition. With a Supplement; wherein the Notions of Archbishop Tillotson, Dr. Lupton, and others, as to the Eternity of Hell-Torments, are impartially represented; and the Reverend Mr. Wall's Sentiments of this learned Work. Price 5s. 6d.

N. B. The Supplement may be had alone. Price 1s. 6d.

The Sick Man visited, and furnished with Instructions, Meditations, and Prayers, suitable to his Condition, for putting him in Mind of his Change, for supporting him under his Distemper, and for preparing him for, and carrying him through his last Conflict with Death. By N. Spinckes, a Presbyter of the Church of *England*. The Third Edition. 8vo. Price 5s.

An Essay on the Duty of Divine Praise and Thanksgiving. By a Clergyman of the Church of *England*. Price 6d.

Certain Sermons or Homilies, appointed to be read in Churches in the Time of Queen Elizabeth. of famous Memory *Folio*. Price 12s. 6d.

The

## *BOOKS printed for T. ASTLEY.*

The Ecclesiastical Histories of Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodorit. Faithfully translated and abridged from the Originals, by Samuel Parker, Gent. To which is prefix'd, a Dissertation concerning the Use and Authority of Ecclesiastical History. By Charles Lesly, M. A. Together with the Lives of each respective Historian, and several useful Notes and Illustrations in the Margin, from the best Authors; as likewise necessary Indexes, and a Letter to Mr. Bolde, added by the Abridger. 3 Vols. 8vo. Price 10s. 6d.

Devout Christian's Companion: Being a Compleat Manual of private Devotions. Collected from the Works of Bishop Tillotson, Bishop Taylor, Bishop Kenn, Bishop Beveridge, Bishop Patrick, Dr. Scott, Dr. Horneek, and Dr. Stanhope. The Sixth Edition. 12mo. Price 2s. 6d.

The great Necessity and Advantage of publick Prayer and frequent Communion: Design'd to revive primitive Piety. With Meditations, Ejaculations, and Prayers before, at, and after the Sacrament. The Seventh Edition, 8vo. By the Right Reverend Father in God William Beveridge, D. D. late Lord Bishop of St. Asaph. Price 3s. 6d.

A Demonstration of the Existence and Attributes of God. Drawn from the Knowledge of Nature, from Proofs purely Intellectual, and from the Idea of the Infinite himself. The Second Edition, with large Additions. By M. Fenelon, the late famous Archbishop of Cambray, Author of *Telemaichus*. 12mo. Price 3s.

A Sermon preach'd at the Funeral of the Right Honourable John Earl of Rochester, who died at Woodstock-Park, July 26. 1680. and was buried at Spilsbury in Oxfordshire, Aug. 9. By Robert Parsons M. A. Chaplain to the Right Honourable Anne Countess-Dowager of Rochester. The Twelfth Edition. 8vo. Price 4d.

Of Original Sin: A Sermon. By William Delaune D. D. President of St. John Baptist College, Oxon. 8vo. The fourth Edition. Price 4d.

Fable

*BOOKS printed for T. ASTLEY.*

Fables of Æsop, and others. Newly done into English; with an Application to each Fable. Illustrated with two hundred curious Cuts. The Second Edition. By Sam. Croxall, Chaplain in ordinary to his Majesty. 12mo. Price 3s.

Dictionarium Rusticum, Urbanicum, & Botanicum: Or, a Dictionary of Husbandry, Gardening, Trade, Commerce, and all Sorts of Country Affairs. Illustrated with a great Number of Cuts. In two Volumes, 8vo. The Third Edition. Revised, corrected, and improved, with the Addition of above three hundred Articles. Price 9s.

Ovid's Metamorphoses. In Fifteen Books. Made English by Mr. Pope, Mr. Gay, Mr. Phillips, and others. Adorned with Cuts. The Second Edition, with great Improvements. By Dr. Sewell. 2 Vols. 12mo.

The Revolutions of Portugal. Written in French by the Abbot Vertot, of the Royal Academy of Inscriptions. Done into English from the last French Edition 8vo. Price 3s.

A Compendium: Or, Introduction to Practical Musick. In five Parts. Teaching, by a new and easy Method, I. The Rudiments of Song. II. The Principles of Composition. III. The Use of Discords. IV. The Form of Figurate Descant. V. The Contrivance of Canon. By Christopher Simpson. The Seventh Edition, with Additions; much more correct than any former, the Examples being put in the most useful Cliffs.

Deſſ. Erasmii Roterodami Colloquia Familiaria Notis Novis illustrata. Ad Uſum Juventutis Politioris humanitatis Studiis Imbuendæ, apud omnes Proteſtantes Britannos Preſertim & Hibernos. Editio niſiſſima, Emen-datiffima, auctiorque Precedentibus, Dublinii, 12mo. Price 2s. 6d.

A Collection of Novels and Tales: Written by that celebrated Wit of France the Counteſs D'Anois. In Three Volumes. 12mo. Vol. I. Containing, I. The Hiſto-



**BOOKS printed for T. ASTLEY.**

History of Don. Gabriel. II. The Royal Ram. III The Story of Finetta, the Cinder Girl. IV. The Palace of Revenge. V. The Story of Anguiletta. VI. The Story of Don Ferdinand of Toledo. VII. The Story of the Yellow Dwarf. VIII. The Story of Young and Handsome. IX. The History of the new Gentleman Citizen. X. The Story of the White Cat. Vol. II. Containing, I. The Story of Fortunio, the Fortunate Knight. II. The Story of the Pigeon and Dove. III. The Story of Princess Fair-Star and Prince Cherry. IV. The Story of Princess Carpillona. V. Perfect Love: A Story. Vol III. (which concludes the whole,) containing, I. The Knights Errant. II. The History of the Princess Zamea, and the Prince Almanzon. III. The History of Prince Elmedorus of Granada, and the Prince Alzayda. IV. The History of Zalmaida, Princess of the Canary-Islands, and the Prince of Numidia. V. The History of the Prince of Mauritania, and the Princess of Castile. VI. The History of the magnificent Fairy, and Prince Salmatis. VII. The History of the Fairy of Pleasures, and the Cruel Amerdin. VIII. Florina; or, the Fair Italian. IX. The History of the Princess Leonice. X. The Tyranny of the Fairies destroy'd. XI. The History of the Princess Melicerta. Translated from the best Edition of the Original French. Price 9s.

The Dispensary: A Poem. In six Canto's. By Sir Samuel Garth, M. D. The Ninth Edition: With several Descriptions and Episodes, never before publish'd. Adorn'd with Cuts. 12mo. Price 1s. 6d.

A Compleat Key to the Dispensary. 12mo. Price 6d.

Poems on several Occasions, address'd to the most eminent Persons of the Age, by the Lady mentioned by Mr. Pope in his Letter, under the Name of Sappho, and with whom Mr. Dryden corresponded by that of Corinna. Mr. Dryden declares, as to her poetical Talents, that she wants neither Vigour in her Thoughts, Force in her Expressions, nor Harmony in her Numbers 8vo. Price 3s. 6d.

The Picture of Love Unveil'd. Being an Answer to one who was very inquisitive to know what Love was. Made English from the Latin of Amoris Effigies. By the Reverend Mr. John Norris, of Bemerton near Sarum. 12mo. Price 1s.

